THE

DÉNOUEMENT.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DENOUEMENT.

THE DÉNOUEMENT:

OR,

HISTORY

OF

LADY LOUISA WINGROVE.

By a LADY.

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MDCCLXXXI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

HISTORY

OF

LADY LOUISA WINGROVE.

LETTER I.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodvill.

ANointed ſovereign of ſighs and groans, "what a woe-begone epiſtle;" and all for what, I wonder? why, the plunder of a heart; an unintentional, an involuntary theft! for heaven's ſake child, of what ſtrange materials are you formed? or why is it that the very ſubject of triumph to the major part of your ſex, is to you only an occaſion of regret?

After all, my dear, I can ſcarce believe your profeſſions to be ſincere; or rather, I imagine, you have deceived yourſelf, what! all this affectionate friendſhip, this tender pity for the unhappineſs of a man that you do not love;—that you never can love! well, we ſhall ſee what theſe platonics will come to! but if I was Sir William, I would not deſpair,

'Twas but a kindred ſound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love!

And compaſſion, in a mind like yours, is rather ſuſpicious, upon an occaſion like this, and where the object is really amiable; a baronet too, with a fine fortune, deuce take this vile capricious little deity of croſs purpoſes! He will pop in his impertinent head, mal-a-propos enough, ſometimes, and at others, where duty, prudence, reaſon and eſteem would concur with every fortunate circumſtance to unite two amiable hearts; he laughs at their various efforts, and delights by his abſence to prove them ineffectual.

But wherefore fly from the preſence of a lover, ſo very reſpectful as Sir William? he is not obtruſive, he is not ridiculous, he does not

not torment you with his aſſiduities or complaints. I ſuppoſe he has by this time entirely loſt that air of ſaucy, careleſs indifference, which I remember has often piqued me, and which I really believe would have made me triumph in the conqueſt.

There is ſomething vaſtly provoking in the haughtineſs of theſe ſecure, confident, ſelf-ſufficient dons, that bid defiance to our charms, and glory ſo much in their boaſted ſuperiority and freedom; and then, how flattering to bend ſuch a ſpirit to our ſway; to convert their high looks into languiſhment; and their pride into petitioning humility. Beſides, on theſe we are not bound to beſtow even our pity, we reſerve this ſoft ſenſation for the gentle ſwain that "unheeding we have taken," that acknowledges our power, ſubmits, *comme il faut*, and wears his chains with a good grace.

Apropos to beaux,—there is a dreadful ſcarcity of them in this country. I am abſolutely weary of it; the place to be ſure is well enough, but—always the country.—I wiſh to heaven papa would take a good humoured fit, I wiſh me up to the metropolis for a few months; but I will not indulge an idea that

can terminate only in disappointment. How is it that I hear no complaints of this kind from you?

Present my most affectionate respects to your father, from his and your

H. Rochdale.

LET-

LETTER II.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Fanfield.

WHY, my dear Henrietta, do you aſk me the reaſon of my ſolicitude to remove myſelf from Sir William? Will not your own heart inform you? You ſay he is delicate, he is reſpectful, therefore why fly him? 'Tis true, he is ſo, and that is the principal cauſe of my removal; were he otherwiſe, I ſhould have leſs anxiety for his happineſs; leſs regret for having wounded it.

You laugh at the concern I expreſs on this ſubject, and ſeem to make very light of what gives me a great deal of uneaſineſs; but is it then nothing to give pain to a heart that loves me!—To be conſtrained to deprive myſelf of the pleaſing ſociety of a man I eſteem, to avoid the reproaches that his preſence cauſes me,—to have only the alternative of abſence, in oppoſition to that of additional unhappineſs to him, and perpetual conſtraint to myſelf!

You

You deceive yourſelf, my Henrietta, in the idea that you would triumph in the uneaſineſs of any human being, were you ever ſo much provoked to inflict it either by reſentment to the object, or a deſire of reflecting honour (by ſuch a conqueſt) on yourſelf. You are incapable of that cruelty, and I think you are above the vanity of ſuch a ſentiment.

You wonder that I do not complain of the fameneſs and inſipidity of the country. There is a very good reaſon why, for I do not find it tireſome or inſipid; and to me it is productive of an infinite variety. Let me rather wonder how it is poſſible for a girl of my Henrietta's fine taſte and numerous accompliſhments to be weary of the moſt delightful ſcenes, merely becauſe they want the charm of novelty to recommend them; or to find that time hang heavy on her hands, or in her imagination, which thoſe hands, and that genius might render ſo entertaining.

Muſic, painting, poetry, the Italian and French languages, hiſtory, natural philoſophy, and other of the ſtill ſublimer ſtudies, that man arrogates to himſelf, and proudly fences from the encroachments, as he calls it,

it, of our ſex, are not theſe ſo many ſources of infinite enjoyment? and in all theſe you excel.—Your obligations, in this particular, to the beſt of mothers, can only be equalled by thoſe which I owe to the tendereſt of fathers. With what unabated care, what anxious attention have they watched over our infant ideas as they roſe; the minuteſt action, the moſt trifling expreſſion, was to them, a matter of importance and ſpeculation, as it ſerved to inveſtigate the diſpoſitions they were to cultivate, and the paſſions they were to curb.

They taught us alſo to reſpect the domeſtic duties; and to know, that none can ſo well, or ſo gracefully perform them, as thoſe whoſe manners are poliſhed, and whoſe minds are improved.

The attributes of our Creator, the bounty of his diſpenſations, and the beauty of his works was above all the higheſt ſource of the ſublimeſt ſpeculation, and the moſt rapturous gratitude; ah my friend! do you remember when firſt our little ſouls received at once the wonderous information and conviction of the mighty debt we owed him? what emotions of

aſtoniſh-

aſtoniſhment we felt, what tears of grateful tranſport we ſhed at the idea of the amazing condeſcenſion of a Being whom, though we conſidered as of power to cruſh us into nothing, we yet were taught to look up to with an aſſurance of that Power's being diſplayed in our protection, ſo long as we continued to deſire and endeavour to deſerve it!

How many years are now paſſed, ſince the ſeaſon of that delightful intercourſe, when our inſtructions, and our enjoyments, our ſtudies, and our ſports were mutual; when I ſcarce knew the want of a mother, in the attention and affection of my revered Mrs. Rochdale, ſuch I am ſure would have been my mother, if ſhe had lived, amiable in the higheſt degree ſhe muſt have been, ſince my father has not even yet ceaſed to lament her loſs.

She died before I can remember to have ſeen her, but the grief of my father, and the uncommon degree of affection with which he ſeemed to have loved her, impreſſed my mind very ſtrongly with an idea of her excellence. When entering on the years of ſenſibility, I have often admired at his motives for frequently weeping over me, while I endeavoured to enter-

entertain him by a thouſand childiſh pleaſantries. He has ſince told me that his emotion was occaſioned by the ſtriking reſemblance that I had to my mother.

Ah, had ſhe lived, how dearly, how tenderly I ſhould have loved her! but ſtill in the preſence of my father, I have ſcarcely any thing to wiſh for, any thing to regret; indeed, if it was otherwiſe, I ſhould be moſt ungrateful, for he is the fondeſt, the tendereſt of parents, and much too partial to the few merits I poſſeſs; his eyes are ſtill turned towards me, like the flower that from morning till evening attends the motion of the ſun, and in its abſence refuſes either comfort or ſupport.

The date of my letter will inform you that we have not yet removed: and I believe the ſtile of it, will make it unneceſſary to tell you, that my ſpirits, are none of the beſt. There is ſomething ſad in the idea of parting *for ever* even with things inanimate, with plants, flowers, and fields, that cultivation and cuſtom has endeared; how much more then in beholding the tears, and returning the adieus of a number of faithful and affectionate creatures, by whom I am beloved, and whom I love, even

for their wants, their dependance and their gratitude, and to whoſe ſickneſs, and to whoſe neceſſities I have been accuſtomed to adminiſter.

Sir William, too!—how ſhall I part from him? yet to-morrow muſt be the day, and my next letter will be dated from Dove-brook, the name of our new habitation. My father tells me I will be charmed with the houſe and ſituation; he obſerves the dejection of my ſpirits, and does all in his power to raiſe them.

Farewell, my Henrietta, in a few days expect again to hear from your

L. WYNDHAM.

LET-

LETTER III.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

THIS ſo much dreaded parting is over at laſt.—I will not deſcribe, becauſe I wiſh to forget it. Sir William begged hard for a correſpondence, but this, for his ſake, I refuſed, with the greateſt delicacy I could.

Our preſent ſituation is delightful, the houſe itſelf is elegantly neat, and the gardens and improvements ſeem to have been the joint production of the moſt luxuriant fancy, and the moſt correct and cultivated taſte.

This part of the country, I am told is rather thinly inhabited, and the few families who do reſide in it are moſtly perſons of fortune and diſtinction. With ſuch I ſhould not wiſh to cultivate much acquaintance, I am of a lowly and unaſpiring diſpoſition, unambitious of the regards or condeſcenſion of the great. Indeed, our reſpective dwellings, are here, ſo

diſtant

diſtant from each other, that our acquaintance may be alſo as diſtant as we pleaſe.

There is one family, however, within the reach of a friendly and intimate neighbourhood; but, the miſtreſs of the manſion is a counteſs, my dear, need I ſay any thing more: we are much too humble to aſpire, and ſhe, no doubt, too proud to deſcend to any advances towards an acquaintance.

Adieu, for the preſent, my Henrietta! when any thing new or entertaining occurs, I will again take up the pen, but I am now rather too much fatigued to be able to write upon *nothing*.

Yours ever and ever,

L. WYNDHAM.

LETTER IV.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

WOULD you believe it, my dear,—a viſit from the Counteſs, the young, the fair, the fortunate, the truly amiable Counteſs of Jerſey! paid in ſuch a manner too—

She walked acroſs the fields, attended only by a footman and her maid. She did not know perhaps how we were circumſtanced, and did not chuſe to be attended on her firſt viſit with the parade of an equipage. After all, who knows if any thing of this ever entered her head? but ſomehow, I felt as if it did, and gave her credit for a piece of delicacy that perhaps ſhe never thought of.

The ſervant announced her entrance, which ſhe made with an air and ſmile of the moſt engaging complacence. She behaved with an elegant freedom, and beſpoke our acquaintance as a favour: adding, that ſhe did not depend

pend on her own abilities to make ſuch an intercourſe agreeable to us, for that her brother would aſſiſt her in ſo pleaſing a taſk.

Who is this brother I wonder? ſome diſſipated man of quality perhaps.

The Counteſs enquired for Lady Eland, and told us, that ſhe had learned from her, our intentions of coming here, ſome weeks before our arrival, ſo you ſee, they are acquainted, and correſpond: and no doubt ſhe has heard of Sir William's unhappy attachment. I hope, however, that if ſhe does know, ſhe will conceal her knowledge of it, and that I ſhall have no idle raillery to endure on the ſubject.

If it was not for this ſame *brother* I ſhould prepare with pleaſure to return the Counteſs's viſit. I dread the probability of his knowing how I was circumſtanced with Sir William; if he gives but the ſmalleſt hint of it, I ſhall deteſt him.—Poor Sir William!—what, my Henrietta, if I was to tell you, that it is ſtill poſſible you may have been right in your conjectures, and that the ſentiment I miſtook for pity was—I know not what it was.—I ſigh, I am painfully ſenſible of his abſence; I ſometimes

times wiſh he had paid leſs ſtrict obedience to my requeſts, that he had followed——this is fooliſh, but it is true notwithſtanding, and I miſs, extremely, the ſenſible, the elegant, the improving converſation of Sir William, but above all I picture to myſelf the regret he feels in my abſence, the pain he has ſuffered, the ſilence he has impoſed on himſelf, his attention, his tenderneſs, his reſpect.—I know not what all this tends to, or what it proceeds from; but ſurely, the human heart is a riddle, that no human underſtanding can fathom; however, be that as it may, the attempt is made in vain by your

L. WYNDHAM.

LETTER V.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

MOST aſtoniſhing this!—abſolutely a phenomenon! only think!—a man of quality—a young man—extremely handſome—an only ſon, an immenſe fortune, a favourite with the ladies, educated in the beau-monde, juſt returned from his tour, and—modeſt!—true as you live, ſenſible too,—unaffected, amiable, in ſhort, poſitively enchanting.

And who, pray, is this wonder?

Why the brother I ſo much dreaded, Lord Mordaunt, only ſon to the Earl of Granville, and brother to the charming Counteſs; for charming ſhe is, tho' not a perfect beauty. She has that ſtile of face that not only ſtrikes

at

at firſt ſight with an idea of united ſweetneſs and good ſenſe, but improves every hour upon acquaintance; and the elegance of her manners, the variety of her accompliſhments, and the goodneſs of her heart, afford a conſtant ſucceſſion of ſomething new, to love, to admire, and to praiſe.

Her brother—I ſuppoſe I muſt deſcribe him too; but how?—why, the exact proportion of his ſtature, the colour of his hair, his noſe, eyes, lips, complexion, &c. no, that will never do, it never conveys an idea—how then! I will give you the *tout enſemble* juſt as it ſtrikes me.

His figure is the moſt perfectly elegant that it is poſſible to conceive, his air noble, a little lofty, but no more than juſt what ſuffices to inſpire reſpect, and to render his attentions the more flattering. His eyes are dark, quick, penetrating, ſparkling alternate with the fire of wit and genius, and the milder expreſſions of ſenſibility and affection. His countenance glows, ſoftens and changes with every emotion of his mind; and even if thoſe eyes, and that countenance were hid, his voice, his action,

his

his attitude, the very motion of his hand is expreſſive of the minuteſt of his feelings. His manners are fraught with the moſt inſinuating grace, and his ſmile is animated with a ſweetneſs that—but you will think I exaggerate, and I do not in the leaſt I aſſure you.

After all how much is there ſtill wanting to complete the picture? the mere exterior in either man or woman is very immaterial, but then I have ſaid, he was modeſt, ſenſible, and unaffected. He appears indeed to be ſo; but I could draw no certain concluſions, as I have ſeen him but once, yet, and he ſpoke ſo little during our viſit, that I had not an opportunity of making any certain eſtimate of his mental qualifications. This reſerve, however, is not uſual with him, for the Counteſs, on obſerving it, ſeemed uneaſy and ſurpriſed, and tenderly enquired if ill health was the cauſe. He pleaded the headach, but I believe not with truth, for the brilliancy of his eyes, and the glow of his complexion left no room for the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of ſickneſs. He had over-exerciſed perhaps, or was—pſha!——no matter what.

Yeſter-

Yeſterday, on my return from Jerſey-Grove, I received a letter from Miſs Eland; ſhe regrets my departure in the moſt affectionate terms; ſhe ſpeaks of her brother, he is melancholy, abſent, loſes his health, declines ſo faſt, they are quite alarmed about him, and are projecting an immediate departure to the ſouth of France, to try what that exhilarating climate will do for the reſtoration of his health and ſpirits.

Good God! why am I made the inſtrument of affliction to one I ſo much eſteem?—Poor Sir William! in my laſt, I remember, I mentioned ſomething, as if I more than eſteemed him, but I deceived myſelf—it was only—what?—I know not, I know not my own heart, but this I know, that it was not love, would to heaven it was! I would wiſh to love, wiſh to return his tenderneſs, and reward his unmerited conſtancy. But indeed and indeed, my Henrietta, I am now more than ever aſſured that it is impoſſible I ever can love Sir William; my friendſhip is ſtill the ſame, my compaſſion ſtill greater, but my repugnance to a tenderer union is, I know not how, more deeply rooted than before.

The

The account that his ſiſter had written me of his ſituation, affected me ſo much, that I was all the night tormented in idea with his ſufferings, heightened by the buſy demon of ſleep, to that degree, that I awoke, ſpiritleſs, dejected and impreſſed with a kind of gloom that was difficult to ſhake off. I encloſe you a few lines of poetry that were dictated by the occaſion.

Ah, ceaſe, tormenting viſion, ceaſe!
Nor image ſtill ſad Damon's woe,
Can I reſtore his baniſh'd peace?
Will friendſhip give it back?—ah, no!

Then change thy likeneſs, gentle dream;
Reproach no more with Damon's pain,
No longer urge the love-lorn theme,
But let him ſtill my friend remain.

Were he content to ſhare ſuch love
As a dear brother might receive,
Then, all he wiſh'd, with joy I'd prove,
But more than this I cannot give.

Then once, fantaſtic power, be kind!
For once a ſuppliant's prayer attend,
Thus chang'd preſent him to my mind,
And loſe the *lover* in the *friend!*—

LET-

LETTER VI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodvill.

POOR Sir William! ah Louiſa! you are *now* convinced you can never love him, your repugnance is *now* greater than ever. And why *now?* I will tell you,—but ſoftly, I muſt firſt aſk you a queſtion; pray, my dear, have you any faith in *fated* love?—in *firſt-ſight* impreſſions?

You were in a poetical vein from the beginning to the end of your laſt letter, and I think your proſe to the full as animated as your verſe; but who would not be animated with ſuch a *tout enſemble*, who could give the deſcription in colours leſs glowing?

Pray was it Cupid, or Apollo that inſpired?

LET-

LETTER VII.

Lord MORDAUNT to Sir GEORGE HASTINGS, Bart.

Jerſey Grove.

OH, George! your prophecy is fulfilled; behold me at length, what you have ſo often predicted,—a lover! my eyes opened on a new world of ſtrange pleaſures, ſtrange pains, new feelings, and new exiſtence!—but why do I repoſe in you a confidence, that will only ſubject me to your raillery? you believe that it is poſſible to love, without ever having formed one juſt idea of that paſſion, without comprehending its nature, or knowing its extent,—do not therefore ridicule what you cannot underſtand, till you firſt have learned to feel it.

The ſmall, but elegant feat of Sir Charles Wilſon, I have already told you, was purchaſed by a Mr. Wyndham: we know not who he was, or from whence he came, till a letter

a letter from Lady Eland informed us particularly concerning him.

Her ladyſhip had long correſponded with my ſiſter, and often deplored the hopeleſs paſſion that her ſon entertained for an object, whom ſhe deſcribed as the ſum of perfection and beauty; but regretted her inſenſibility to the love and the merits of Sir William: this object, ſo loved and ſo praiſed, we knew not to be the daughter of Mr. Wyndham, till a few days before his arrival at Dove-brook, when Lady Eland recommended her ſo warmly to my ſiſter's acquaintance, that I expected its commencement with the greateſt impatience; yet,—would you believe it! an unaccountable ſomething prevented me from accompanying my ſiſter, on a viſit which ſhe made them.

She raillied me ſmartly on her return, and laughed at the eagerneſs that I ſhewed for ſome account or deſcription of this inexorable beauty, but none would ſhe give me; and "take care of your heart, my lord!" was all the anſwer I could receive.

The next day, a carriage ſtopped at the gate, I ſtarted, I ran to the window,—my ſiſter laughed, I returned with precipitation, vexed at having diſcovered my impatience, ſhe would have it that I bluſhed.—"What Harry! before you have ſeen her;"—nay replied I, if you are ſo much afraid for my heart, I had better keep it out of danger, and will do ſo I promiſe you, if you go on at this rate.

I thought I had ſaid enough, but ſhe only redoubled her mirth; I was almoſt angry, the entrance of the viſitors reſtrained me,—Mr. Wyndham and his daughter were not of the number, and I felt, though I did not care to confeſs myſelf diſappointed.

They came however, at laſt, the counteſs introduced them,—Brother—Miſs Wyndham, —I gazed in ſilent wonder, I had ſcarcely power to return her grateful ſalute, a penetrating glance from my ſiſter arouſed me, and I endeavoured to aſſume a freedom of carriage, but I felt that it was conſtrained, I felt all a confuſed tumult of emotions and ideas hitherto unknown.

Yet it was not a mere form, a ſet of features and complexion, it was the animating ſoul, the ſpark of kindred ſentiment that kindled at my heart.—It was,—but why ſhould I attempt a deſcription of what no pen can deſcribe, no pencil can paint? Her form and features I could exactly delineate, but how ſhall I convey to your ideas the grace that accompanies her every motion, the gentle dignity of her air and manner, the faſcination of her ſmiles, and the bewitching ſenſibility that opens in her countenance?

It was in vain that the down-caſt eye, and heightened complexion of the ſweet Louiſa reproached the earneſtneſs of my gaze; I felt that I was guilty of rudeneſs, I endeavoured to direct my eyes elſewhere, but they involuntarily returned, and fixed their regards upon her.

She talked too, to complete her conqueſt, and O George! ſuch language!—ſuch ſentiments! uttered too with ſuch an accent, in a voice—it ſtill vibrates in my ear!—ſo tuned, ſo modulated, ſo ſweetly harmonious!—alas! unhappy Eland!

My

My ſiſter ſpoke of Lady Eland, and ſaid, that ſhe had juſt received a letter in which ſhe informed her, that Sir William had determined on a journey to the ſouth of France, to reeſtabliſh his health, which declined very much. Louiſa bluſhed ſcarlet deep, and turned away to hide a tear that ſtarted to her eye. What a diſpoſition! oh, how I loved her for the charming diſcovery!

Mr. Wyndham appears not much turned of forty, his perſon is noble and graceful, his air uncommonly penſive, and his countenance has a ſweet but dejected caſt, his manners have a poliſh that muſt have been acquired in a ſituation very different from his preſent retirement. His circumſtances ſeem to be eaſy, but not affluent; perhaps the loſs of fortune, or that of friends may be the cauſe of his alienation from the world, and the dejection that is ſo viſible in his countenance.

But tell me, do you not think it ſtrange that the addreſſes of Sir William Eland ſhould be rejected? brave, generous, handſome and accompliſhed. How could a tender and ſympathizing heart blaſt the hopes, and the hap-

pineſs of ſo deſerving, and ſo adoring a lover, unleſs that heart was preoccupied by another? a diſpoſition like Louiſa's cannot be incapable of love, yet who can hope to ſucceed, when Sir William Eland has failed? I know not what to think, but I would ſtill flatter myſelf that her affections are diſengaged, and that they may be reſerved to return the paſſion, and complete the happineſs of your

H. MORDAUNT.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

YOU aſtoniſh me, Henrietta! *firſt ſight!* —ſure you would not inſinuate—but what foundation?—what have I ſaid to make you ſuppoſe that—pſha, ridiculous, you could not have ſuppoſed it! but if you did, I aſſure you your penetration ſees double, for, far as I am from loving Sir William, I know not that man upon earth, who could rival him in my regard. But no more of him! let me endeavour to forget the painful ſubject. He is gone with his mother and ſiſters to France: O may he meet that repoſe that he ſeeks for, may peace return to his breaſt, and ſucceſsful love obliterate every painful idea of the paſt.

I have already diſmiſſed one ſubject, and half a ſheet of paper not yet filled up; what then ſhall I do for the reſt?—The country,—no room for my deſcriptive talents, nothing curious, or particular; groves, hedges, gardens,

dens, meadows, and corn fields,—nothing more,—well then, the amuſements!—I have ſeen none,—the neighbourhood then!——but one family that we are as yet acquainted with, and I muſt be ſilent in their particular, for fear of ſome man of your ſage concluſions. So fare you well my dear. I am ſure you expected a long letter, but you may thank yourſelf for your diſappointment.

LET-

LETTER IX.

Sir GEORGE HASTINGS, Bart. to Lord MORDAUNT.

London.

SO then, that little damned, miſchievous urchin, love, whim, caprice, or whatever you pleaſe to call him, has at laſt robbed me of my friend, has "turned his wits the ſeamy ſide without."

Your letter found me in the propereſt mood, to rally its contents, and convince you of their folly. Inſpired by the jolly god, with a hearty contempt for your little puny deity, I have juſt broke from a circle of choice ſpirits, to aſk you whether you have not given the conge to your ſenſes?

Can it then in reality enter your head, that the Earl of Granville, with a fortune of twenty thouſand pounds per annum, will ſuffer an only and accompliſhed ſon, the darling of his affections, and the honour of his family, to

ſtoop

ſtoop to the degrading alliance of an obſcure girl? ridiculous my dear Harry! hope not, dream not of it; the overture would not ſubject you to the mortification of a certain denial, and the weight of his heavy diſpleaſure.

This your paſſion may deem a misfortune for the preſent, but your delirium will ſoon end, and you will find it a benefit and a bleſſing.

I admit that this Louiſa may be beautiful, even to exceſs, as you allege, and that you muſt be wretched for a time, without her: but this is a matter very eaſily obviated; your manners are inſinuating, your perſon formed to charm, ſuch a conqueſt, with love, liberty, and a handſome ſettlement for life, would make her the envy of four fifths of the ladies in capital.

After all, my dear boy, I have a certain fear about me, that the ſanity of my counſels may be thrown away upon you. I have often remarked in you a peculiar ſqueamiſhneſs of morals, that not only ſubject you to a thouſand inconveniencies, but in a manner ſhuts

the

the door of ſociety againſt you; do my dear Harry, abate of this fault, I beſeech you, 'tis in the eye of the world, the moſt unpardonable of which you can be guilty. Be more pliant, more conformable to the cuſtoms of mankind, or you will ſhortly be left to yourſelf, as comfortleſs and lonely as the old ſolitary tree on the commons of Banſtead.

LETTER X.

Lord MORDAUNT to Sir GEORGE HASTINGS, Bart.

Jerſey Grove.

HOW have I been miſtaken! how have I been deceived! but the deluſion is vaniſhed; and he who poſſeſſed my confidence, and ſhared my heart, avows himſelf unworthy the name of friendſhip.

To me then, Sir George! to me, would you propoſe your ſchemes of treachery and ſeduction? Me would you load with the guilt of corrupting female purity, of ſeducing innocence, and that too under the maſk of tenderneſs and affection;—heavens! how could I have been ſo long, and ſo greatly deceived?

But you were intoxicated when you wrote, —fain would I endeavour to apologize for your ſhocking propoſal; yet I can hardly think that

that the temporary privation of reaſon, would admit of ſuch horrid ſentiments, in a breaſt naturally honourable and humane.

Farewell, I wiſh for your reformation, but can no longer accept of your friendſhip.

LET.

LETTER XI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodvill.

NAY, now my dear, you are quite unreaſonable, you puniſh me too ſeverely for a little harmleſs raillery; however, I promiſe you, that you ſhall no more have any reaſon to complain of me, in this particular, provided that you no longer treat me with reſerve; beſides, if you are innocent of my charge, why any concealment? the beſt way to convince me that you are ſo, is to write with your uſual freedom; and ſince your ſcene of acquaintance and amuſement is confined to Jerſey Grove, pray do not ſhut me out from your circle any longer.

As for me, I have nothing wherewith to entertain either you or myſelf; my life glides on in the prettieſt little innocent, ſimple, inſipid manner imaginable, and fidgeting about from one demure employment to another, forms the whole contour of my ſprightly amuſements.

Since

Since you were ſo firmly determined againſt a union with Sir William, I am glad that he has left the kingdom; his abſence will rid you of a painful remembrance, and may poſſibly cure himſelf of a diſeaſe that no other medicine could remedy.

This love is a ſad diſmal piece of buſineſs; papa, too, ſeems ſenſible that it is ſo, and reſolves to keep me out of harms way; however, I would venture the trial, ſince I ſhould be very certain that I had inſpired, before I would ſuffer myſelf to feel it.

Write, pray write, my deareſt Louiſa; your letters are the principal pleaſure of my life, do not then deprive your Henrietta of almoſt her only enjoyment.

LETTER XII.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

WELL, my dear, cenſorious, blundering girl, I find I muſt forgive you this time; but remember the conditions you yourſelf have agreed to.

We are now quite intimate at Jerſey-Grove, and I aſſure you, I am downright vain of the diſtinction with which the charming counteſs honours me, yet it is not for her elevated rank, but her ſuperior excellence, that I am ſo. There ſeldom paſſes a day, that we are not together, either here or at Jerſey Grove. We laugh, chat, ſing, walk, and work, alternately, but muſic fills up a principal portion of our time: in this Lord Henry is a great aſſiſtance; he is maſter of ſeveral inſtruments, and excels on the violin and german flute; his voice too is moſt exquiſitely charming, and is ſoftened with a cadence and expreſſion that it is impoſſible to deſcribe.

Lord

Lord Egmont's family, Colonel Wilvilſe's, and ours, are almoſt the only frequent viſitors at Jerſey Grove. I was introduced to them all; they ſeem to have very little character, ſo I will not attempt to deſcribe them. In my mind, our little circle wants no addition; Lord Henry too is of the ſame opinion, and declares his diſapprobation whenever the counteſs talks of enlarging it. Pray be quiet, my dear Eliza, he cries, if you will think with me, we are perfectly happy as we are. Why ſhould you and Miſs Wyndham ſacrifice your time for the hazard of other people's improvement?

But I have not yet told you of the terrible diſaſter that befel me, nor that I now write with my left eye bound up with a handkerchief. Rackets and his lordſhip had, I aſſure you, like to have been fatal to it; however, I was not much hurt, even at the time, but the violence with which the ſhuttle-cock ſtruck againſt it ſtartled me a good deal. Lord Henry turned as pale as death; daſhed down the racket, flew to me,—then to the bell,—rang it with violence,—uttered a thouſand incoherent ſentences, and ran about the room like one diſtracted!—I ſtood looking at him for a

few

few minutes, and then burſt into an immoderate fit of laughter.

This reſtored him to his ſenſes, he took my hands, he trembled all over,—"How unfortunate!—but was I indeed not very much hurt?—might he hope?—might he?"—I continued to laugh, he coloured like ſcarlet.—Lady Jerſey entered, he flew to her, and told her the dreadful ſtory, one word of which ſhe could not underſtand; but gueſſed at the accident, from ſeeing the handkerchief to my eye. The pain was, by this time, almoſt gone, but as it was a little ſwelled ſhe thought it neceſſary I ſhould keep it covered.

His apprehenſive lordſhip is ſcarcely yet recovered from the ſhock of this terrible event. Either at Dove-brook, or at his ſiſter's, he is perpetually at my ſide. If I am ſilent, 'tis from exceſs of pain, if I talk, 'tis only to quiet his fears, I muſt not walk out for fear of too much air. Working, reading, or painting, would be worſe; it would ſtrain my ſight too much; now I have but *one eye*, I laugh at his preſcriptions, but I obſerve them however; for he makes up by his company and his ſiſter's for the loſs of my uſual amuſements.

He

He ſings, plays, and reads for me by turns, but this, alas! was the cauſe of another unfortunate miſhap.

A new Tragedy was announced, very beautiful, very intereſting, and highly wrought. Lord Henry would read it. The counteſs and I were all attention. The cataſtrophe quite overcame him, his voice faultered, his tears flowed, he cloſed the book for a moment, and turned to us,—we were drowned in tears, and wept and ſobbed moſt violently.

He was alarmed,—away flew the tragedy,—heavens! had he but thought, but reflected a moment! that curſed book!—why did he read it?—he was mad to read it!—we ſhould be ill!—we muſt have drops!—we muſt have ſomething!

My eye too, would be all inflamed!—what an unfortunate wretch!—he folded his arms round us,—deareſt Eliza!—deareſt Miſs Wyndham!—will you, will you forgive me! I believe he would hardly forgive me if he knew that I have laughed twenty times ſince at the recollection of his diſtreſs.

I don't

I don't know how it is, but I find myſelf more entertained in the company of the counteſs, and her brother, than, I am ſure, I ſhould be in any other ſociety in the world, that of my Henrietta excepted, and was ſhe here there would be no addition wanted to the happineſs of her

L. W.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

Sir GEORGE HASTINGS to JOHN REYNOLDS, Eſq.

London.

WHAT a pleaſure it is, my dear Jack, to have a friend, to whom a man may open his whole heart, without apprehenſion or reſerve: our ſouls are in a manner the ſame, they quadrate like dice; and anſwer like a pair of indentures to each other.

You have already ſeen and converſed with the young ſentimental heir of the Granville family; ſo I need not deſcribe him to you. My acquaintance with him commenced by an accident, when we were both on our tour, in Italy. He ſaved my life (though a ſtranger) at the hazard of his own. I was grateful; I loved him; of conſequence I ſtudied his

his diſpoſition, and conformed myſelf in a meaſure to principles that were very oppoſite to my own; for in ſpight of his romantic abſurdity, he does not want for ſenſe, and is beſides uncommonly amiable, at leaſt I then thought ſo, and was induced in part to diſſemble my real ſentiments, rather than forfeit ſo agreeable an acquaintance, and one to whom I was ſo much obliged.

But all is now cancelled, all is forgot,—ſuch an inſult as I have received!—I encloſe you his impertinent letter,—read, read, I beg of you:—I alſo encloſe you a former one, giving an account of his ridiculous attachment; together with a copy of my anſwer to it, as nearly as I can recollect. I was indeed warmed with wine, when I wrote it, or I ſhould not have told him ſo openly my mind, but ſurely it did not deſerve ſo inſolent a retort.

I ſhall not exact a perſonal ſatisfaction, I do not believe he would accept a challenge; and if he did, it would be only a common revenge. But to rob him of his Louiſa, Jack! that, that would be glorious vengeance! and

ſuch

ſuch a ſcheme have I laid, that it is ſcarcely poſſible it can fail of ſucceſs.

In the firſt place, I have already written a penitential letter to his lordſhip.—Exceedingly concerned for having given him offence, by what was only meant as a jeſt.—Should not have even rallied upon ſuch a ſubject, but wine, &c.—Acknowledge myſelf in the wrong, —would not forfeit his friendſhip for the world.—Counterfeit a paſſion for Miſs Walpole; for whom I really have a little *tendre* —her charms, and his good example have at length reformed me,—wiſh of all things to ſee him, and requeſt his company in town.

Mark what follows:——he thinks me ſincere, and as he cannot leave his ſiſter, will probably invite me to Jerſey Grove.——I come, ſee, and overcome, for I am not uſually unſucceſsful in affairs of gallantry. But let that happen as it may, the breach between them is inevitable, for I have laid my plot ſo deep, that my revenge is certain, though my ſcheme of ſeduction ſhould fail.

You

You ſhall hear from me again, when I receive Mordaunt's anſwer, till when I remain

Your

G. HASTINGS.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

Lord MORDAUNT to Sir GEORGE HASTINGS.

Jerſey Grove.

LET us exchange forgiveneſs, George; I accept of your apology, and very willingly aſk pardon in return for any offence that I may have given you.

I the readier credit your profeſſions of reformation, as you acknowledge yourſelf no longer a prophaner of the gentle power, but an humble ſuppliant at his ſhrine. You have attached yourſelf to a woman of worth and honour, moſt ſincerely do I wiſh you ſucceſs; but yet,—you will pardon me George,—I can yet ſcarcely perſuade myſelf that you are in love, you are too diſſipated, too much under the dominion of paſſion and caprice, I fear you have not yet learned to

{Selfiſh

(Selfiſh joy diſdaining) ſeek alone
To bleſs the dearer object of your flame.

True love, George, is enriched by beſtowing; its principal joy conſiſts in the conſciouſneſs of imparting enjoyment; without this fond ſenſation, a Venus, new riſen from her native ſea, were leſs eſtimable to him than her marble to the *Medici*.

The former part of your letter I do not ſo much wonder at, as it was a very natural concluſion you draw from my father's loftineſs; I fear indeed it is but too juſt, yet that is at preſent the leaſt of my concern. A more important care hangs heavy at my heart: for could I once be ſo bleſſed as to gain an intereſt in the gentle boſom of my lovely Louiſa, I ſhould not deſpair of my father's conſent; notwithſtanding the diſparity of our fortunes and ſituation, I would hope every thing from his fondneſs, and the natural goodneſs of his heart. My mother too, may not her influence have ſome effect? She loves me with a wildneſs, an enthuſiaſm of maternal affection! and I return it with a love paſſing all that ſon ever entertained for her from whom he drew his exiſtence and nouriſhment.

Never

Never ſhall I forget the affecting ſcene, when I was torn from her to accompany my tutor to Italy.

My child, ſaid this fond parent, do you know that your mother's life is bound up in her Henry? You are young, and inexperienced, my ſon; of a warm and precipitate temper; any cauſe, if ſlightly coloured by friendſhip or generoſity, is ſufficient to engage you in the moſt perilous undertakings. O heaven! ſhe exclaimed, and burſt into tears,—firſt lay theſe locks in the duſt, let my eyes cloſe for ever before they behold—I cannot ſay—I dare not think—you underſtand me, my Harry!

Too well, too well, madam, I paſſionately replied; you ſhall make a coward of me, I will grow careful of this inſignificant life, for the ſake of a life that is infinitely dearer.

Will not this mother, think you, exert to the utmoſt her influence, in favour of a ſon ſo dear? And can a fond father, and an adoring huſband, reject her ſoft ſolicitations? But above all, one ſight of my angel will baniſh every objection, and inſtant admiration muſt ſucceed. You will perhaps think this the colouring of

paſſion, but *every* eye brightens at her approach, *every* heart gladdens at her preſence.

Think not, however, George, that the ſeducing graces of beauty alone could ever have fixed my heart; think not either, but that I could love, entirely independent of them. Were age, were uglineſs itſelf informed with a ſoul like Louiſa's, that ſoul would ſhed a faſcinating charm around it, infinitely more attractive and endearing than any thing that beauty can boaſt.

About four days ago as I was rambling about Mr. Wyndham's improvements, I thought I ſaw ſomething like the form of Louiſa, entering a hut, at a good diſtance from me; I inſtantly flew towards it, the door was open, I entered, but no one appeared; the back paſſage opened into a little garden, I paſſed it, and through the branches of a hedge that was at hand, I diſcovered the lovely girl, like an angelic miniſter of heaven diſpenſing comforts and bleſſings to all around.

A widow, the proprietor of this lowly manſion, ſat beholding her from a bench of turf, while ſhe ſtood encircled by the five children

of

of her penſioner. To one ſhe ſeemed to dictate ſome matter of inſtruction, to a ſecond ſhe gave ſweetmeats, ſhe dreſſed the head of a third; ſhe took up a cherub looking little boy, and kiſſed it with tenderneſs, and all ſucceſſively ſhared in her bounty or endearments. They looked up to her delighted, they ſeized, they clung about her, ſhe broke from them, with a playful air, and they followed with a ſhout of joy.

At laſt ſhe turned to the mother, and perceiving that the tears, drop by drop, rolled in ſilence down her cheeks, ſhe kindly took her by the hand, and enquired why ſhe wept. O my young lady, ſhe replied, forgive my tears, they do not flow from ſorrow, but from gratitude, from wonder at your condeſcending goodneſs. Louiſa ſmiled inexpreſſible ſweetneſs, and turning to the place where I had concealed myſelf, I was obliged to deſert my poſt, as my unexpected appearance at that time might have put her to ſome confuſion.

The moment I got home, I ſat about contriving ſome ſtratagem for aſſiſting this favourite, in ſuch a manner, as might hold it concealed from her benefactreſs, and even

from herſelf, what quarter it came from. I have ſucceeded to my wiſh, and am rejoiced at it, as from the appearance Mr. Wyndham makes, I do not imagine his fortune to be ſuch as would anſwer every demand that ſo benewolent a heart might make upon it.

I thank you for your invitation, but cannot accept of it at preſent; Lord Jerſey, as you know, has left my ſiſter in my guardianſhip till his return from France. And as well on her account as that of Louiſa, it is not in my power to attend you; but if you will favour us with your company at Jerſey Grove, I promiſe you a hearty welcome. I wiſh you could prevail on colonel Aſhworth to accompany you. I have written to requeſt it, but fear that it will ſcarcely be in his power. Lady Aſhworth's declining years, and health requires the tender attention of ſuch a ſon; and he pays it moſt nobly.

Your's ever

H. MORDAUNT.

LET-

LETTER XV.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

EVERY day ſome freſh inſtance occurs of the virtues and benevolence of this amiable family.

Have I ever mentioned to you a Mrs. Chalmers, an unfortunate widow, who by the prodigality and death of her huſband, was reduced to the utmoſt indigence and diſtreſs, and would have periſhed with her five children, had not Providence directed me to the miſerable cottage, where they had taken ſhelter, and laid themſelves down to die?

I continued to viſit this poor widow, and ſupply her with the neceſſaries of life, when a few days ago as I walked towards the cottage, ſhe came running to meet me, her countenance expreſſive of a variety of emotions; ſhe ſunk on her knees before me, ſhe kiſſed

kiſſed my hands, and my gown, and wet them with her tears. O my deareſt madam, ſhe at laſt exclaimed! this is too, too much! you overpower, you cruſh us with the exceſs of your goodneſs! 'tis in vain that you would ſhrink from acknowledgments, and ſtrive to avoid the overflowings of our gratitude; it is, alas! the only tribute that is left us to pay.

I was aſtoniſhed! I aſſured her I was entirely ignorant of her meaning. She then produced a rouleau containing fifty guineas, which had been incloſed in a cover, directed to her, with juſt a few lines intimating the donor's deſire, that ſhe ſhould receive the money and apply it to her own uſe, but take no further notice, nor mention a word of it to any one.

I knew not what to think, but retained the cover, and promiſed I would endeavour to find out the hand. The counteſs of Jerſey firſt ſtruck me, but I recollected that neither ſhe, nor her brother had ever heard me mention the name or circumſtances of this unfortunate woman. They both ſpent the next day with us at Dove-brook, and an opportunity offered of diſcovering what I before ſtrongly ſuſpected.

After

After coffee,—I ſat down to the harpſichord, as uſual, and Lord Mordaunt accompanied me on the German flute. When we had performed ſome pieces of the moſt approved maſters, the counteſs deſired her brother to favour us with the ſong which he had compoſed, in imitation of the Scotch airs; he played, and afterwards ſung it, at my requeſt, the words too were his own, and pleaſed me ſo much, that I begged a copy of them; he inſtantly took the original from his pocket-book, and preſented it to me. A ſudden thought ſtruck me, I retired to the window, and taking out the cover that had accompanied the donation to Mrs. Chalmers, I compared the writing with that of the verſes, and found it to be exactly the ſame.

I felt myſelf colour exceſſively, and haſtily ſlipped the paper into my pocket.

Why did I bluſh that time? what cauſe had I for it?—but one is ſometimes in a humour to bluſh at every thing.

I requeſt, my dear Henrietta, that you will never again rally me, on my ſuppoſed affection for Lord Mordaunt. Twice or thrice that day,

day, when my eyes met his, your letters came into my head, and I looked,—ſomehow,—very fooliſh, I am afraid. But indeed, from the moment that I made the diſcovery I told you of, I felt as if there were a hundred pulſes in my cheeks: and the glow of them continued through the whole evening. Ever ſince, have I been endeavouring to find out the reaſon of this, but all to no purpoſe. Unleſs it was the fear of his having ſeen that I was acquainted with what he wiſhed to conceal.—Certainly, it muſt have been that.

LETTER XVI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodville.

PREPARE for a ſurprize, my Louiſa, prepare for a thouſand gratulations to your friend! My brother, that moſt beloved of brothers whom we have ſo long lamented as dead; he lives, he is found, he returns to our arms!—but take his own account of his moſt providential eſcape.

"At the battle of Fontenoy, ſo fatal to our brave troops, I acted as aid de camp to his Highneſs the Duke of Cumberland; in the heat of the engagement my horſe was killed under me, and I fell, covered with blood, though but ſlightly wounded, among the dead and dying; my right leg was faſt in the ſtirrup, and I was further incommoded by the weight of my horſe, for I had fallen under him; ſo that it was with difficulty and much ſtruggling that I at length diſengaged myſelf.

"I then fought for ſome time on foot, and eager to diſtinguiſh myſelf, I had the good fortune to atchieve one of the enemy's ſtandards, and was returning with triumph. But my precipitation had hurried me beyond the bounds of prudence. I was ſurrounded by a party of the enemy, and though I fought with deſperation, determined to ſell my life as dear as poſſible, I grew at laſt faint with loſs of blood, and fatigue, and was juſt ſinking to the ground, when their commanding officer rode up.

"He ordered them inſtantly to deſiſt, and taking me kindly by the hand, Brave ſtranger, ſaid he, in French, I grieve that you have ſuffered ſo much from the barbarity of thoſe men whom I have the misfortune to command, but I will do my beſt to repair the injuries you have ſuffered, and to give you a more favourable impreſſion of my country than you have yet had reaſon to receive.

"I had ſcarcely ſtrength left to thank him for his timely and generous aſſiſtance, but fainted, covered with wounds, into his arms.

"When

"When I recovered, I found myſelf on a bed in his tent, he was ſitting beſide me, and held my hand in his; the moment I opened my eyes, I perceived that my preſerver was intereſted in my fate, and that he afterwards appeared rejoiced when the ſurgeon pronounced my wounds not mortal. I expreſſed my ſurprize and gratitude for his generous concern; why ſir, replied he, ſhould you wonder at an action that common humanity would dictate? beſides I am indebted to you for the emulation which your gallant behaviour inſpired me with; it caught my notice, and challenged my eſteem, and from the beginning of the engagement I remarked and endeavoured to imitate it. My name is *St. Alnais*, be under no apprehenſions from confinement, I ſhall detain you, but not as my priſoner; from the moment that your health permits it you are free, ſo ſaying he quitted me without waiting a reply.

"Though my wounds were not mortal, yet all the ſkill of the ſurgeons could not prevent a long and very dangerous fever, during which the ſociety and attention of my preſerver contributed more than any thing to my cure. I languiſhed for ſeveral weeks from the

the criſis of the diſorder, before I was perfectly recovered; and *St. Alnais* was ſcarcely ever from my ſide. By this means we had each of us an opportunity of inveſtigating the diſpoſition and ſentiments of the other, and we found them ſo perfectly correſponding, that a ſincere and tender friendſhip enſued.

"I now began to reflect on the anxiety which you, my dear parents, muſt feel from ſo total a ſilence with regard to your ſon; and determined as ſoon as my health would permit, to look out for ſome method of conveying you certain intelligence concerning him; this I did, and wrote ſeveral letters, but never received any anſwer; a length of time had now elapſed, I was alarmed, I determined to return, and imparted my intention to *St. Alnais*.

"Alas! my dear Rochdale, he replied, your apprehenſions reſpecting your parents remind me, like Pharaoh's butler, of my own faults at this day.

"My father is dead, I have but one parent, but ſurely, the deareſt and tendereſt that ever looked with bleſſing on the face of a child.

child. But what bounds can be ſet to the intemperance, and paſſions of a boy? I had heard of the high honours that were to be atchieved in war; and hurried on by an internal propenſity that I could not reſiſt, I ungratefully and ungraciouſly forſook this precious mother, and engaged a volunteer in marſhal Saxe's regiment, where I was gradually promoted to the command of a troop. If you will accompany me on a viſit to my mother, and that a peace (which is now talked of) ſhould take place, I promiſe you to uſe my utmoſt intereſt for permiſſion to return with you to England.

"I joyfully embraced this propoſal; we ſoon reached the well known habitation, but alas! this beloved mother was not to be found, nor any tidings had concerning her.

"How ſhall I tell you the diſtraction of my friend; we travelled great part of France in her ſearch, at length deſpairing to find her, *St. Alnais* turned to me with a fondly dejected air—I have now, ſaid he, no parents, no kindred, no connections with any one but yourſelf upon earth; a peace is concluded, I will fulfil my promiſe, and quit for a time,

ſcenes

ſcenes that ſerve but to remind me of the miſery of my loſs.

"We are preparing to return, take care of your heart, my ſiſter; he is the loveliеſt of the human ſpecies."

Thus far proceeds my brother's letter; do you not ſmile at the concluſion? This formidable friend, my dear, let him come! I ſet him and his attractions at defiance; he is a noble fellow for all that, and I believe I ſhall love him—a little.

Your

H. ROCHDALE.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

Sir GEORGE HASTINGS to JOHN REYNOLDS, Esq.

Jersey Grove.

I Promised in my last to give you a minute account of the progress I should make in the affections of this little gypsey; and presumptuously imagined I could not fail of success: for to say truth, in affairs of gallantry I have generally come off with an *Io triumphe*; but here I have been most superlatively baffled, she will not allow me to come within the length of any possible capitulation.

What in the devil's name can be the matter with her? I never was used so in my life; but these country damsels are so confoundedly skittish,—yet no, let me not injure her,—she has not the smallest tincture of rusticity in either her person or deportment, and I do

her

her no more than juſtice, when I allow that it is impoſſible for any one but myſelf to take exception to any thing about her. To me indeed ſhe ought to appear every thing that is ugly and deteſtable, ſince ſhe ſeems to regard me in no better a light.

She has been but once at Jerſey Grove ſince I came, though we have often viſited at her father's: my eyes alone can convey to her the intelligence of my heart, and ſhe ſeems diſconcerted, and even offended at their language. The impertinent ſtare of curioſity is diſguſting and offenſive to every one; but the fixed regard of admiration and paſſion is what moſt fine women think due to their charms. But I know too well how to account for this coldneſs; Harry (confound them both) is certainly the Endymion of this Cynthia's contemplations. Her fine face is involuntarily animated with joy at his approach, and clouded with chagrin at his departure; all her complacence, all her attention is laviſhed upon him alone. Could I become a tame romantic, virtuous fool like him, I ſhould perhaps obtain ſome ſhare of her approbation; but in ſpight of the cautious regularity of my conduct, my eyes I fear have betrayed me, and

the

the little prude more than gueſſes at what ſhe would call the depravity of my ſentiments. Thus am I doomed like ſatan on the tree of life, to envy, and even hate, that virtue which I have neither will nor ability to practiſe.

Yeſterday, Harry and I walked together to Mr. Wyndham's, where I again ſaw his lovely daughter; I fancy ſhe ſpied our approach from the window, for though her favourite was with me, yet ſhe was called ſeveral times before ſhe would deign to make her appearance. But ſhe ſhall dearly repent this rooted averſion to me; for though I doat on her to diſtraction, yet there is a ſpecies of malignity in my paſſion. This hated pair ſhall jointly ſhare my vengeance, and the ſtorm is now impending that ſhall ſhortly burſt upon their heads.

Yours more than my own,

G. HASTINGS.

LETTER XVIII.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodville—eleven o'clock at night.

HE is come! he is come, my dear Louiſa, and I ſit down even at this late hour to communicate my happineſs to you; the compliment indeed is not much, as I have no manner of inclination to ſleep.

'Tis not many hours ſince he arrived. After dinner I went out to the garden to pull a noſegay, when Frederic came to let me know that my father deſired my company.

I inſtantly obeyed——when I entered the parlour, the firſt objects that preſented themſelves were two ſtrange gentlemen at the head of the room. Their backs were to the light, ſo that I was in doubt of ever having ſeen them before, but ſomething within me was of intelligence, and whiſpered that it was my Edward; for I felt my heart throb, and my colour

colour come and go,—my father ſmiled.—— As I approached I began to diſcover the well-known features; and ſpringing forward, I cried out, Oh! my brother!——My ſiſter! my Henrietta! he exclaimed, and caught me in his arms.——I heard no more, but inſtantly fainted away.

When I opened my eyes, I ſaw my dear and tender mother in tears, and kneeling beſide me; and heard her ſay to my father, Why my love would you ſurprize her ſo, I knew her gentle ſpirit could not bear it? Gentle fiddleſtick, returned he, ſhe will be well enough by and by.

My dear Edward held my hand in his, and wet it with his tears, which flowed in abundance down his manly cheeks; how affecting it is to ſee a man weep, Louiſa? I obſerved too, that the ſtranger had turned to the window to conceal his emotion.

My brother is, I think, rather improved by his travels; he has loſt indeed the delicacy of his complexion when a boy, but has contracted in its ſtead a martial air and manly deportment, which is much more becoming and agree-

agreeable than beauty in a man, if attended with the leaſt appearance of effeminacy.

Would to heaven, Louiſa, that you were here to complete my happineſs.—The ſtranger —but I will tell you of him in my next, for the preſent my hand is almoſt giddy with the joy of this meeting, and I muſt bid you a reluctant adieu.——

H. ROCHDALE.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

The ſame to the ſame.

Woodville.

LE jeune François. I think I have promiſed to give you a deſcription of him. I muſt tell you in the firſt place, that he bears a moſt ſurpriſing reſemblance to you; his features, tho' maſculine, have exactly the ſame turn and expreſſion; his ſtature is nearly the ſame as my Edward's, but his limbs have an appearance of greater delicacy, without ſeeming to deduct either from ſtrength or action.

If I was not certain that you never had a brother,—but that is fooliſh,—and yet you are ſo like! you together put me in mind of thoſe lines of Milton.

For contemplation he, and valour form'd,
For ſoftneſs ſhe, and ſweet attractive grace.

I will

I will tell you an odd incident though, that happened the day after his arrival.

I could not you know pretend to deſcribe unleſs I obſerved him with attention, and my brother ſmiled and looked arch, as who ſhould ſay, Ah Henrietta, Henrietta! is that the method you take to avail yourſelf of my caution: but I was reſolved to diſappoint him, and taking out your picture, I ſhewed it to him, and aſked if he could not diſcover in it a ſtriking reſemblance to his friend: he looked at, and dwelt upon it with ſurprize, and turning to St. Alnais, aſked him with a ſmile if he ever had a ſiſter; being anſwered in the negative, he preſented him with the picture, at the ſame time leading him to the looking-glaſs. He however continued gazing on the portrait; his colour changed, his head ſunk upon his boſom, and he burſt into tears.

We were alarmed; my brother took his hand with an affectionate anxiety, and enquired the cauſe of his emotion: but inſtead of anſwering his queſtion, he aſked me with an earneſt ſolicitude, if I was acquainted with the perſon for whom that picture was drawn? Yes, ſir, replied I, ſhe is my intimate friend,

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the lovelieſt of women, girls I ſhould rather ſay, for ſhe is not yet eighteen, and her name is Louiſa Wyndham.

Louiſa, too! cried he, and ſtarted, but again ſighing he returned me the miniature, and aſked pardon for the ſurprize and uneaſineſs he had given us; but indeed, continued he, had you not named the original of that picture, I could almoſt have ſworn that my mother had ſat for it, and every thing that brings that dear mother to my mind, awakens my remorſe for the ungrateful return I made to her care and tenderneſs.

Is not all this very extraordinary, my dear? but I ſuppoſe we muſt place the reſemblance I mentioned among what philoſophers call the ſports of nature.

Ever and affectionately your

H. Rochdale.

LETTER XX.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

AH, my Henrietta! your predictions are accompliſhed, and your poor friend is undone. ——A fatal accident has convinced me of my folly; but wherefore blame accident, ſince it was not that which inſpired, but only opened my eyes upon the wretchedneſs of my ſituation.

This evening I took a walk with my maid into the fields, but had not gone many yards from the houſe when we ſaw Lord Mordaunt muſing and alone, and moving ſlowly towards us. He ſaid he intended us a viſit, but turned and walked with me a piece on the path which I had taken.

In

In a ſhort time we perceived riding acroſs the field a young man, richly dreſſed, and intoxicated with liquor; on his approach, he threw himſelf from his horſe, and would have forced a kiſs from me, whereupon my lord inſtantly kindled, and cloſing his hand, gave him a ſtroke on the face, that obliged him to meaſure his length on the ground.

All in a tremor, I walked on, rejoicing to have eſcaped without inſult to myſelf, or danger to my preſerver; but my triumph was premature; the wretch quickly recovered and overtook us, and pouring forth a volley of blaſphemous execrations, he drew a cutlaſs, and made a paſs at Lord Henry; I ſcreamed, and ſcarcely retained a part of my ſenſes: but the firſt thing I obſerved was the horrid ruffian groaning in the duſt, while the blood flowed from his mouth and noſtrils.

I turned to my lord, and with a voice feebly articulate, enquired if he was hurt. Ah! I continued without attending his reply, why muſt I be the cauſe of precipitating yourſelf into danger? why ſhould ſuch a life be riſqued for my preſervation? I would with tranſport

meet death itſelf, interrupted he, to protect you from danger or inſult.

What could he mean, Henrietta? alas! what does it ſignify? the worſt is, that I conſtrued all ſo favourable to myſelf, that I muſt have looked, and ſpoke a thouſand indiſcretions.

I trembled to ſuch a degree, that I was obliged to accept of his arm to ſupport me to the houſe; and I thought that I felt him preſs the hand he held gently to his heart.——Ah that heart!—why was I ever made acquainted with its value?

When we were ſeated in the houſe, I obſerved that his hand was wrapped in a cambrick handkerchief: I inſtantly took the alarm, and approaching nearer, I ſaw that it was bloody; I caught hold of my father's arm, look!—ſee then, I cried—ſee what miſchief I have occaſioned. He ſtepped up and uncovered the hand. Do not be frightened, Louiſa, ſaid he ſmiling, the wound is not mortal; 'tis, thank heaven, no more than a ſlight cut; go fetch ſome of your famous ſalve, and that applied by

by the healing hands of a fair lady, will ſoon ſet matters to rights.

I obeyed, tottering as I went, and ſoon returned with the dreſſing, but as I waſhed the blood from his hand, a tear, which I vainly endeavoured to reſtrain, fell upon it; my cheeks glowed at the involuntary indiſcretion: but how was my confuſion increaſed, when with a look expreſſive of the moſt pathetic tenderneſs, he raiſed the dear hand to his lips, and kiſſed off the tell-tale drop. I would have given the world to recall it; my heart throbbed, I ſunk into a chair and burſt into tears.

Luckily my father had retired; how greatly muſt it have diſtreſſed him to have been witneſs to my folly!

Lord Henry ſeated himſelf beſide me, and ſolicitouſly enquired the reaſon of my tears. I could not anſwer him.—He aroſe, and taking both my hands, gazed with an inquiſitive concern in my face, then ſuddenly dropping them, he turned from me, and traverſed the room. By this time I was tolerably compoſed, and pleaded my fright as an apology for my weakneſs: but he is already (I make no doubt) ac-

quainted with the real cauſe, though in pity he affects a total ignorance of the matter.

My father juſt then entered, and I begged permiſſion to retire. I ran up to my room, and locking the door, I threw myſelf on the bed, and gave a looſe to my ſorrow. I afterwards ventured down to tea, but Lord Mordaunt was gone; a freſh proof, that, of the goodneſs and delicacy of his heart, he would not increaſe my confuſion by his preſence.

Heavens! what will become of me? 'tis now too late to ſtruggle in the toils; adviſe me, my Henrietta, pray for me, and pity your very unhappy friend

L. WYNDHAM.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodville.

ALAS! my poor friend! you are undeceived then at laſt; you find after all that you have ſomething mortal about you. Truly, a moſt mortifying diſcovery! a woful caſe yours, to be ſure! you love and are beloved by the moſt elegant, the moſt amiable of mankind, and you cry, "what will become of me?—pity me, Henrietta!" I will not pity you, Louiſa.

Lord Mordaunt, I am poſitive, loves you, every circumſtance confirms it; I am alſo confident that he is not yet aſſured of your affection, and that he waits but for that diſcovery, to make an avowal of his own.

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As for my brother's favourite, whoſe approaches were announced as ſo very formidable, I don't know what to make of him; he is beautiful to be ſure, beautiful as the Adonis, yearly lamented by the daughters of Sidon; but then his manners are utterly the reverſe of his perſon; ſo diſtant, ſo ceremonious, ſo ſentimental, and all that,—and a male prude is what I diſlike above any thing that is female. Yet this fellow has a heart, I aſſure you; aye, and a tender one too, as you ſhall hear, though, all the notice he takes of me ſeems to put me upon the venerable and reſpectable rank of his grandmother.

You know my fondneſs for birds, though I cannot confine them to cages; I therefore contrived a method of attracting them to me by a voluntary attachment. I uſed to ſtrew crumbs of bread on the window of the garden parlour, leave it open, and retire to ſome diſtance, till the ſweet little ſongſters had finiſhed their meal. I approached nearer each time that I repeated my donation, till at laſt they became ſo tame as to bear me cloſe beſide them. There was one robin in particular, that would peck out of my hand, and perch at times on my head and ſhoulders; I caught

it

it one day, and tied a bit of ſilk round its leg, that I might know it from the reſt, but here

My notes muſt turn to tragic:

On a day, as I ſtood with my brother and his friend at a window, we obſerved a kite hovering over a flock of ſmall birds; St. Alnais caught up a fowling-piece, and ran out, we followed, he fired, and brought the felon to the ground; but ſome of the harmleſs choriſters ſhared in the ſame fate, and among them, alas! was my favourite robin.

I ſcreamed out that my bird was dead. I reproached St. Alnais with my loſs, and he too joined in reproaching himſelf; he put it into his boſom to try to reinform it with warmth and life; he lamented its death in the tendereſt accents; nay, he actually ſhed a tear upon it. Though ſo many of mine had flowed on the occaſion, I was yet aſtoniſhed and affected at a degree of ſenſibility ſo uncommon in a man. His treſpaſs, and my misfortune were both, in that moment, forgot; and I bluſh to acknowledge, that I juſt then felt (for the firſt time) an impreſſion of tenderneſs for a man, who has never ſhewn the ſmalleſt partiality for

for me: nay, I aſſure you, he even appeared ſorry for his momentary condeſcenſion. His pride, no doubt, was hurt at the recollection, that he had betrayed an intereſt in ſuch a trifle, as the diſtreſs of a female, or the death of her favourite; and he immediately withdrew himſelf to his former diſtance, and even a pitch beyond his uſual ſtatelineſs. Proud wretch, but it does not now ſignify, for the alteration in my ſentiments was juſt as ſudden as that in his behaviour; it is effectual too, for I no longer have the ſame good opinion of him, as formerly: before this, I had almoſt perſuaded myſelf, that the diſtance, the frigid politeneſs of his air and manner, was perhaps owing to the little intercourſe he has had with our ſex (as I hear he led quite a retired life before his entrance into the army). I can form a thouſand excuſes for the timid ſwain who fears to offend, by even the common attentions which cuſtom and good manners muſt dictate: but this is not the caſe with St. Alnais; he knows how to pay them with the moſt elegant grace, but his pride diſdains the condeſcenſion, and reproaches him whenever he is guilty of it.—Let him, I care not! I am glad however that he has diſcovered himſelf in time,—in time!—did I then acknowledge that I had al-

moſt

moſt——but no matter,—my heart is again my own.

Folly! to thee, fantaſtic queen,
I raiſe the grateful lay,
That yet one youth I have not ſeen
Unfetter'd by thy ſway:

When late my heart at love's alarm,
Had near for ever flown,
Thy magic pow'r diſſolv'd the charm;
And bade—that pow'r to own.

A noble form, a graceful mien,
And animated air,
An eye where genius ſelf was ſeen
With gentleneſs to ſhare.

A poliſh'd mind, a wit untir'd,
In decent freedom bold,
All, all againſt my peace conſpir'd;
And a loſt heart foretold.

But when the trembler, on the wing,
Juſt bid a laſt adieu,
When none could elſe aſſiſtance bring;
To aid her, Folly flew.

To mar enſnaring Cupid's plan,
The queen her pow'r addreſt,
She daſh'd with pride the charming man;
And freed my captive breaſt.

O then let none that pow'r deſpiſe,
Of vulnerable heart,
Since, while it blinds Love's cruel eyes,
It alſo blunts his dart.

LETTER XXII.

Lord MORDAUNT to Colonel ASHWORTH, at Bath.

Jerſey Grove.

SHE loves me, Charles! my Louiſa loves me!—I am indebted to accident for the charming confeſſion: ſhe has herſelf pronounced my happineſs.

This morning I went at Mr. Wyndham's deſire, to breakfaſt with him at Dove-brook, but my impatience to ſee his lovely daughter, took me there of the earlieſt, for he had not yet left his chamber, ſo I ſtrolled into the garden, and traverſed the front walk, when turning, I perceived, in a ſummer-houſe oppoſite, a woman ſeated, with a book in her hand: it was Louiſa, and never did I ſee her appear ſo exquiſitely charming. Her dreſs was negligent,

gent, but inexpreſſibly elegant; ſhe held in her hand, a recent and very affecting little poem, entitled, Edwin and Emma; and in the other a handkerchief, that caught the precious tears as they fell.

At laſt ſhe appeared quite overcome, and unable to proceed, the book dropped from her hand, and ſhe ſuddenly exclaimed,—Yes, cruel father! you muſt be obeyed, and Emma's hapleſs fate ſhall be that of the equally wretched Louiſa!

She then roſe, but ſeeing me ſtanding juſt oppoſite, ſhe gave a ſhort ſcream, and ſunk down again, half fainting on the ſeat.

I threw myſelf at her feet, I entreated forgiveneſs, and made a thouſand apologies for my intruſion. She paid not the leaſt attention to what I was ſaying, but claſping her hands in an agony, 'Tis paſt, ſhe cried, and my indiſcretion has betrayed the ſecret, which I would have died rather than voluntarily reveal. Riſe, my lord, continued ſhe, with an air of dignity, you are already apprized of my weakneſs; you pity it too, (for ſhe obſerved

ſerved my concern), and you are too generous, to repay with contempt, an accidental confeſſion of my tenderneſs for you.

For me!—for me!—I exclaimed!—gracious heaven! can it be poſſible? do I indeed live to ſuch happineſs, ſuch rapture?—She could not now retract the confeſſion ſhe had already made, and my vows of gratitude, and never-ending love obtained a confirmation of it; for till ſhe again repeated the delightful aſſurance, I could not bring myſelf to believe that my happineſs was real.

O Charles, had you ſeen her at that tranſporting moment, her tears, her bluſhes, the delicate tenderneſs that animated her whole frame!——I will fly to my father, my prayers, my importunities ſhall obtain his conſent. But what would become of me, in caſe of a refuſal?——yet why apply to you? you have never loved, and therefore knows not how to make allowance for the ardour, the impatience of a lover,—why are you not in love, Charles?

You know I have at my own diſpoſal, clear 600 l. a year, the bequeſt of my late uncle Stanemore; might we not—But alas!—a father's diſapproving frown—perhaps his curſe! —horrid!—I know not what to reſolve on!

Your

H. MORDAUNT.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

O Charles!—I am undone!——wild with grief! with deſpair!—the beloved of my ſoul—ſhe is ill! dying!—and will not ſee me!—will not permit me to have the conſolation of expiring beſide her!—ſomething extraordinary muſt be in the caſe, ſome villain has traduced me!—let me but know? let me but find him?—I will tear out his treacherous heart!

Yet, O gracious heaven! whatever muſt be the fate of this unhappy wretch, ſpare, ſpare my Louiſa!—ſpare the deareſt, the lovelieſt, the moſt finiſhed of your works!

What can be the meaning of her refuſing me admittance? I am diſtracted with the variety of my conjectures on the occaſion! Her father too is ignorant of the cauſe of her illneſs,

neſs, and turns with deteſtation from the offer of comfort!

My ſiſter too was here, and has ſeen her, but ſhe was then delirious, and as ſoon as ſhe came to her ſenſes, ſhe deſired that none but her maid might be permitted to attend her, ſhe will not even allow a phyſician to be called in.

I have never left Dove-brook, nor taſted any kind of nouriſhment, ſince the news of her illneſs reached me,—I am one moment ſtupified, and the next frantic with my ſorrows! If ſhe dies!—Charles!—I will not,—I cannot ſurvive her!—I can write no more, my head ſwims!—my hand trembles!—

Adieu,

H. MORDAUNT.

LET.

LETTER XXIV.

The ſame to the ſame.

Jerſey Grove.

'TIS as I ſuſpected,—ſhe has been deceived into a belief that I was unworthy of her tenderneſs, and her gentle heart ſunk under the ſhock.

The day after I wrote my laſt, when I went to her antichamber, to learn ſome tidings, I was told that ſhe had juſt then fallen into a fine refreſhing ſlumber; I beckoned her maid to approach, and putting a purſe into her hand, requeſted ſhe would let me have a ſight of her miſtreſs; ſhe rejected the money, but admitted me upon a promiſe of making no noiſe.

I kneeled

I kneeled down by the ſide of the bed, and gazed a while upon the ſleeping angel, the roſes were withdrawn from her cheeks, and an affecting languor ſucceeded throughout her countenance; ſhe ſeemed, though aſleep, to be in great agitation, her boſom heaved with ſighs, and the tears ſtole gently from between their ſilver covering, and moiſtened all the pillow.

My heart was wrung with anguiſh, I laid my cheek cloſe to hers, and mingled ours tears together.

I roſe at laſt; and was going to retire, when I eſpied a paper that had fallen from her hand on the floor, it lay open, and my name was ſubſcribed, I eagerly caught it up; the writing might have been eaſily miſtaken for mine, but I inſtantly knew it to be that of Sir George Haſtings; it was directed to Miſs Wyndham, and the contents were as follows.———

SHALL I conceal any thing from a perſon, who conſtitutes a principal part of my exiſtence?—no, I will not conceal it!

Know

Know then, my angel, that I once loved a young creature, to paſſion, as I then thought, but my preſent feelings convince me, that my love for her, compared to that which attaches me to you, was but as a drop to the ocean, or an hour to eternity.

In brief—after reciprocal and repeated engagements, ſhe jilted, and betrayed me; exaſperated to the height by ſuch a proof of female perfidy, I made a vow, and confirmed it by many fearful execrations, that I never would marry. Ah, raſh, and inconſiderate! I little thought what was then before me, and am now tempted, like Sampſon, to break all theſe *cords* in ſunder; yet ſure, all the civil or matrimonial inſtitutions that ever were framed, cannot make me more firmly yours than I am already; all that I am, all that I have is yours without reſerve.

I am too much diſtracted at this time to reſolve upon any thing, and therefore beſeech you to meet me at ſeven this evening, at the far end of the Bird walk; where, whatever you preſcribe, whatever you ſhall be pleaſed

to

to dictate, ſhall be as the laws of the Medes and Perſians to your

H. MORDAUNT.

As ſoon as I had peruſed this infernal ſcroll, I left the chamber, and hurried out in ſearch of the villain who had forged it; nor know I to what lengths my paſſion might have carried me, but God had happily taken my vengeance into his own hands.

Having ſought him in vain through all the fields and gardens, I ſpied a croud in a lawn that led to the next town, and thither I haſtened to enquire after him.

The throng gave way to my approach, but judge of my amazement, when I beheld Sir George, pale, bloody, groaning, and ſtretched upon the earth, without power of ſpeech or motion.

As I earneſtly demanded how this came to paſs, a bold blunt looking man, with a budget at his back, came up and addreſſed me.

Why

Why, Lord Harry, ſays he, I didn't mean to anger you, becauſe as how, you've a good word in every poor body's mouth; but had he made as free with a girl of your honour's, as he wanted to do with my pretty Gatty, methinks you could have done little leſs vor him than I did.

You muſt know then, that about an hour agone, as my wife and I was walking the road, that open to every honeſt Engliſhman, without croſſing fence or ſtyle, I miſſed a plate of pewter, and deſired Gatty to hold onward, while I went back in ſearch. Before I could find ur howſomever, methought I heard Gatty give a ſqueal, and then a louder, and again a louder; ſo I hurried back at top ſpeed, and caught this here gem'man wreſtling a fall with my wife!—My poor Gatty indeed fought it fairly, and left the mark of every nail ſhe had in his face.

It was then, I confeſs, I laid on him with might and main, and ſpared neither head nor hide, till I left him, juſt as you ſee him.

My

My honeſt friend, ſaid I, you have paid him his full wages, and he merited the whole; all my concern is, that you have brought yourſelf into trouble, and will be arraigned for his murder, as I think he cannot ſurvive.

O never fear, maſter, cried the homely jolly tinker, the devil will never die by the ſide of a ditch, as the ſaying is. Sbobs! if his majeſty, heaven bleſs him, would uſe my Gatty ſo, I would be tempted to fit him with as good a trimming as the beſt taylor at court could meaſure or make up.

A number of Lady Jerſey's ſervants had now joined the croud, ſo I ordered one to take a horſe and ride off immediately for a ſurgeon, and deſired the reſt to take up our errant and miſadventurous knight, and convey him to the next inn.

I then requeſted the gallant tinker to introduce me to his Gatty, which he did with a proud pleaſure, when taking out my purſe, I preſented it to her, as an acknowledgment of her virtue, and a reward for her chaſtity; and returning inſtantly to Dove-brook, I threw myſelf

myſelf at Mr. Wyndham's feet, confeſſed my paſſion for his daughter, told him of the arts that had been practiſed againſt us, ſhewed him Sir George's letter, informed him of his tragic adventure, and beſought him to prevail on his Louiſa to allow me a moment's hearing.

The old gentleman embraced me with tears, and departed on his commiſſion; after a while he returned, and offered to introduce me.

When I entered the chamber ſhe was ſitting up in her bed, ſupported by pillows, but very pale and languid, notwithſtanding a ſmile of chearfulneſs, which ſhe endeavoured to aſſume.

On my approach, ſhe raiſed her hands in a ſweetly jocular, but petitioning attitude, and prayed me to pardon her for having believed it poſſible that I could act diſhonourably in any particular. But, continued ſhe, (bluſhing) I now find myſelf ſo delightfully conſoled by the detection of my error, that I no longer regret the ſufferings it occaſioned.

My

My father has acquainted me with the cataſtrophe of Sir George. I heartily rejoice that it was not your hand which adminiſtered the reward of his perfidy.

Then you ſee, my dear Charles, that my affairs once more begin to wear a ſmiling aſpect; and my Louiſa is, if poſſible, dearer than ever to my heart; ſhe continues to mend apace, and I hope ſoon to ſubſcribe myſelf your happy friend.

H. MORDAUNT.

LETTER XXV.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

AT laſt, my dear Henrietta, I am entirely recovered from my ſhort but very ſevere indiſpoſition, with the particulars of which you are already acquainted, but my preſent happineſs, though incomplete and precarious, yet it compenſates in a meaſure for all my former ſuffering. My Harry loves me, I am dear to his heart, to that of his ſiſter, and my father has conditionally approved of our affection. But ah, Lord Granville! there,—there I am ſtill vulnerable—'tis ſure, he never will, he never can conſent; and it is alſo certain that though I were this moment cut off from every hope, I yet could never ceaſe to love my amiable Harry!

O did you know!—were you like me acquainted with his excellence!—you would pity, but could not blame me: his diſpoſition, his ſentiments, ah, my Harriet!—never, never ſure was ſuch a heart as his.

I lately read (ſaid my father to him one day) a French author, who attempts to demonſtrate that all our friendſhips and affections, and even the boaſted virtues of generoſity, and ſo forth, have their original growth, and expanſion in *ſelf-love*. Tell me, my dear friend? I aſk not your ſage opinion, but your genuine and ſweet feelings on this ſubject, where it is ſo boldly affirmed, that there is no ſuch thing in the love of another?

That guilt, and every ſpecies of vice, ſhould have the foundation in *ſelf-love*, I can evidently conceive; and am convinced that neither ſatan, nor Adam, nor any other creature would ever have lapſed, had it not come to paſs through *ſelf-love*, and ſelf-weening, that the love of ſelf alſo can produce hatred to others, ſuch as envy, diſguſt, malice, and all other malignant paſſions; it is the natural proceſs and procedure of things. But that love to ourſelves ſhould beget in us the love

of

of another; that one and the ſame cauſe ſhould produce conſequences ſo contraſted, ſo adverſe, ſo irreconcilable as love and hatred, bounteouſneſs and grudging, rancour and benignity, and the like oppoſite offspring of heaven and hell; I might be as rationally perſuaded that wolves may yean lambs, that the vulture may bring forth the dove, or the branches of the crab-tree bend beneath the cluſters of the grape.—But what do you think of this doctrine?

I apprehend, my dear Sir, replied Lord Mordaunt, that the matter in debate has nothing to do with argument. I ſuppoſe a man born blind, all the deſcriptions, and definitions in the world will never ſupply him with a ſingle idea either of the beauty or benefit of light. Nay he will argue with you againſt its exiſtence, and obſtinately inſiſt that there is no ſuch thing in nature; but ſhall his blind ratiocinations have any weight with me againſt the exiſtence of that light which guides my ſteps, which illuminates my ſight, whoſe comforts I feel, and whoſe bleſſings I enjoy.

Now love is to the human ſoul, what light is to the body, it animates, pervades, chears,

directs the ways of his ſpirit, and carries him forth in the benevolence of kindly offices to others,—when he cannot relieve, he grieves with the afflicted, he rejoices in the happineſs of all who are happy, and thereby participates in the bleſſedneſs of all the living.

Here then, it may be enquired, how love, which is the author, the bleſſing and joy of the univerſe, ſhould come to be a matter of affliction or pain?—But the truth is, that love never was a cauſe of diſpleaſure or ſuffering to any creature; it cannot be too fond, it cannot be too intenſe, it is the heaven of God himſelf, and conſequently of all his intelligent reſemblances. But in beings of a mixed nature, where ſpirit and body are ſo intimately united, each may have its diſtinct intereſt, and the body may attract its more refined companion to the groſſer ſhare of its own propenſities, and thus the firſt generous emotions of what we flatteringly entitled love, may be perverted to a ſelfiſh paſſion, and conſequently ſubjected to all the jealouſies, ravings, and pangs of which lovers complain, and thus love and ſelfiſhneſs may be blended together like two colours into one maſs, and yet remain in their reſpective

natures

natures eternally oppoſite, and eternally diſtinct.

Love in its own nature is of neceſſity its own reward; it as ſurely produces happineſs as fire produces light; and I perſuade myſelf that, when we are diveſted of theſe partial and impaſſioned organs, that impel us ſo forcibly from our bliſs, to our bane, we ſhall find that love among the celeſtials is merely an action, and in no ſenſe a paſſion: an action as it is in God of infinite energy, bearing its bliſs within itſelf, and beaming without bounds in beneficence and benignity upon all creatures.

What think you of this, my Henrietta, are not theſe noble, are they not heavenly ſentiments?

I have been ſince my recovery to viſit my penſioner, poor Mrs. Chalmers; her health is viſibly declining. I wiſh ſhe was more communicative; there is undoubtedly ſomething in her hiſtory with which ſhe has not yet acquainted me, nay ſomething I fancy which muſt be very extraordinary.

When

When I told my father of her illneſs, he propoſed going to ſee her himſelf, and ſpeaking ſome matter of comfort to her. She had not ſeen him before, ſo I thought it neceſſary to go firſt, and prepare her for his coming. I told her who it was that waited for admittance, and what was the intention of his viſit; ſhe joyfully acquieſced and ſat up in her bed to receive him.

He entered,—but the moment ſhe caſt her eyes on his face, ſhe uttered a loud, and heart-piercing ſhriek, and fell back in violent convulſions; my father retired immediately, and my aſſiſtance with ſome reſtoratives, with difficulty brought her to her ſenſes: as ſoon as I ſaw ſhe was ſufficiently recovered, I ventured to aſk the reaſon of her ſudden and alarming fit.

That gentleman!—ſhe wildly replied, did you not ſay he was your father?—So he is, my dear Mrs. Chalmers.—No, no! ſhe cried, in a ſhrill and frantic tone, it cannot, it muſt not be, that would indeed be a refinement upon wretchedneſs, upon the intenſeneſs of my puniſhment!—What! the man whom I have ſo greatly, ſo irreparably injured, and his daughter, his angel daughter, has preſerved the lives

of

of myſelf and my little ones.—Great God! there wanted but that to fill up the meaſure of impending judgment!—but then mercy is ſaid to exalt itſelf on the talleſt growth of guilt, provided penitence lies weeping in the duſt beneath its ſtroke!

O the years! the years of anguiſh that I have paſſed!—may they expiate!—gracious heaven!—may they have blotted out the remembrance of my crimes!

Tears here came to her relief, they flowed plenteouſly, and ſhe appeared much eaſier, but I feared to increaſe her diſorder by any further queſtions.

I aſked my father if he had ever before ſeen or been acquainted with her? but he tells me not, and that he does not know of any female living who could have done him the injury ſhe mentions. Mighty odd and myſterious all this!

She has been (at her own deſire) very much alone theſe two days paſt. I don't know how ſhe has employed her time during that period; but ſhe now appears much more compoſed than

than before, and ſeems to wait with tranquillity and a degree of pleaſure, the awful event that ſhall conſign her to eternity.

She would hear of no phyſician but a mental one. I do not think ſhe can live many days, but I have great reaſon to hope that her latter end will be that of the righteous. O how fervently when our own time is at hand, ſhall we all join in that important prayer, *In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us.*

She is worſe, I am called upon—

Adieu, your

L. WYNDHAM.

LETTER XXVI.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

ALAS! my dear, ſhe is gone!—poor Mrs. Chalmers is no more! She ſent this morning again, to requeſt my preſence. I went, and as I approached the bed, ſhe raiſed her hands and eyes to heaven,—I ſaw her intention, and kneeled to receive her bleſſing. She gave it in a moſt awful, and affecting manner, I then roſe, and ſeated myſelf beſide her. My miſtreſs, ſhe cried, I have been faulty, dreadfully ſo indeed; wretchedneſs too has been the inſeparable companion of my guilt; but my prayers, my tears have at length prevailed for pardon, and I look forward to my diſſolution, as the mariner to his port; the wiſhed for hour is at length arrived, all ſpent and overwearied I have at length reached the goal, but bleſſed is the length of miſery that cloſes in virtue.——

Here ſhe pauſed, and deſired that her children might be called,—they came;—ſhe embraced and bleſſed them by turns, and leaning back in the bed, ſhe gave a deep ſigh and expired.

My father now entered, and hurried me away from this ſcene of diſtreſs: he has taken upon himſelf the care of her interment,—and promiſes a proviſion for the dear little orphans ſhe has left behind.

I forgot to tell you, that about an hour before her death, ſhe took from her boſom a packet, and preſented it to me: it was ſealed and directed to the Earl of Jerſey; and ſhe requeſted that it might be delivered into his own hands, immediately on his return. I wonder what acquaintance ſhe could have contracted with the Earl; but her whole conduct for theſe few days paſt has been to me an inexplicable enigma.

LETTER XXVII.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodville.

YES, my dear Louiſa, I do indeed admire him, and believe there is but one man in the world, who can challenge any ſort of compariſon with him—Who is that pray? Edward?—no; Edward is not ſo handſome, nothing near ſo accompliſhed, and I am afraid, not altogether ſo good, though better than nine-tenths of the more virtuous half of his ſex. He bears about the ſame proportion to Lord Mordaunt, that I do to you, my dear.—Who then can it be?—you would never gueſs. St. Alnais?—impoſſible;—the proud, the inſenſible, the—Softly, ſoftly child; I once ſaid as much myſelf, to be ſure, but one may happen to be miſ-

taken

taken you know; and poor St. Alnais is now acquitted of every thing, but a fooliſh penchant, for a little giddy brained girl, who would rather think it was her want of vanity, than lack of diſcernment, that made her ſo long miſinterpret his conduct.

You muſt know, I have got a maid, the moſt tender hearted in the world, ſenſible of merit too I aſſure you. She admired St. Alnais prodigiouſly,—for certain the poor gentleman was in love, and love is a ſad thing! It made her heart ache, ſo it did, to ſee how diſmal he looked of late; then fixing her eyes upon me,—ſhe wondered in her heart, how any young lady could be ſo cruel as to take no notice, and keep never minding, when ſo ſweet a gentleman was in ſuch a piteous taking.

I affected for ſome time, to diſregard her ſilly chat; but at laſt, after a little encouragement, ſhe ventured to diſcloſe the important ſecret, with which ſhe had for ſome time laboured. St. Alnais had ſtolen from her a lock of my hair, with which ſhe was marking my handkerchiefs, and ſlipped it (unſeen as he thought)

thought) into his boſom. She could have cried, ſo ſhe could, to ſee one ſo pretty, ſo true-hearted; and eſpecially when ſhe ſaw him afterward kiſſing it in a corner, with the tears in his eyes, when he did not think that any one was looking, and ſure, when a poor dead lock of hair was ſuch a comfort to him, he muſt be the moſt virtuous and conſtanteſt of lovers.

This intelligence (though I did not entirely believe it) ſunk deeper in my mind than I choſe to diſcover to my informer. I appeared to take no notice, till an accident convinced me of the truth.

Edward obtained from my father, a promiſe of taking me this winter to London: and he and St. Alnais are gone to prepare a houſe, and every thing for our reception. The morning of their departure I roſe earlier than uſual, to make breakfaſt for the travellers, and entering the parlour, I ſaw St. Alnais, alone, and ſtanding at the far end of the room, with his face turned to the window. He did not perceive my entrance, but ſeemed very intent upon ſomething he held in his hand; I was curious

curious to know what it could be, and ſtealing cautiouſly forward, judge of my ſurprize, my confuſion, and my joy, when I beheld that very lock, he had ſtolen from Barbara, twiſted round his fingers, and alternately preſſed it to his lips and his boſom.

My heart fluttered with a pleaſing emotion, I held in my breath for fear of interrupting him; but never once conſidered how fooliſh I ſhould look, at being caught in that ſituation.

He returned it at laſt to its hiding place, and raiſing his head, and ſeeing me ſtanding almoſt beſide him, his face was inſtantly covered with bluſhes, he bowed with a diffident and confuſed reſpect; and heſitatingly ſtammered out the compliments of the morning.

I hope his own embarraſſment prevented his taking any notice of mine; I could think of nothing to ſay in my excuſe; I endeavoured not to appear conſcious, yet could not acquire courage to pretend ignorance; the more I attempted to extricate myſelf, the more

my

my preſence of mind forſook me: and if I made any apology for my intruſion, or attempted to rally him on his ſituation, I did it with ſo bad a grace, that I am ready to beat myſelf every time I reflect on the awkward figure I made.

I wiſh you could aſſiſt me at finding out the reaſon of the ſilence, the reſerve, and the extreme diſtance of his behaviour; I will tell you to what I have myſelf at times aſcribed it. St. Alnais's fortune is ſmall, my father's, as you know, is princely, may not this conſideration have prevented him from avowing his paſſion?—Ah! if I was aſſured that it was ſo!—I would be—I was almoſt going to ſay, I would be tempted to ſpeak firſt. But no, ſpight of the confidence my vivacity inſpires, I fear there is no admiſſible method for a maiden to ſay, "I love!"—But then, this amiable man!—has he not a title to my gratitude, to my heart? Has he not ſaved the life of my brother?—My mother eſteems him for his virtues, and adores him as the preſerver of her child. I need make no mention of my brother's attachment; I have already told you, they ſeem to live

but

but in and for each other. In future, however, I may hope, that he will transfer a portion of that attachment to

Your

H. ROCHDALE.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

YES, you are indeed happy, my Henrietta; long, long may you continue ſo, whatever becomes of your wretched friend!

My heart has long foreboded that I was not born to joy,—too faithfully has it propheſied,—but I am now reſigned, I ſubmit without murmuring to my fate.

A few nights ago, I had the moſt extraordinary dream that you can imagine. I thought I was ſitting with Lord Mordaunt, when the Earl of Granville entered; he was accompanied by Sir George Haſtings, who juſt pointed to us with a ſmile of triumphant malice, and

and retired; the earl approached his ſon with a menacing air; and with a voice ſcarce articulate through fury, exclaimed, Wretch! what is this that you have done? but think not to eſcape my juſt reſentment, your Syren too ſhall dearly pay for her treachery and preſumption; then ſtamping with his foot, a number of armed men entered; here, continued he, take this *Circe* hence, and convey her where neither I nor my infatuated ſon ſhall ever more behold her.

I ſcreamed aloud at the dreadful ſentence; my Harry ſtarted up, and caught me in his arms; but they approached, and were proceeding to tear us aſunder, when ſuddenly the air grew dark, the room ſhook, as with an earthquake, the ruffians vaniſhed, and the earl ſtood trembling beſide us; then looking up, I beheld the ceiling open, and my mother deſcend, all bright and beauteous, as I have often ſeen her in former dreams.

She approached towards the earl, and whiſpered ſomething in his ear; then turning to me, ſhe embraced me, and joining my hand with that of Lord Mordaunt, ſhe raiſed her eyes

eyes to heaven, and implored a bleſſing on our heads; and now, my child, continued ſhe, 'tis no longer an illuſion that you behold, 'tis your own, your living mother, never more to be parted from the darling of her affections.

She then preſented us to the earl. Here, ſhe cried, you would have divided two hearts that were formed by heaven for each other; you have even oppoſed your own happineſs, your own deſires, but you are bleſſed in ſpight of yourſelf, for the ſake of this amiable pair, you are bleſſed; let it then be the future ſtudy of your life to deſerve, and be grateful for the mercies you have experienced.——This is all; my joy, my tranſport was ſo great, that I awoke.

On this ſtrange dream was I ruminating, when Lord Henry ſent in his name. As he entered, I was ſhocked and terrified at the impreſſion of grief and agitation that was viſible in his countenance, and ſhook his whole frame; he perceived my emotion, he took my hand, and looked with a mournful tenderneſs in my face; he attempted to ſpeak, but could

not,

not, and taking a paper from his pocket, he preſented me with it, and turned aſide to hide his tears.

It was a letter from Lord Granville; I peruſed it trembling.——This inhuman father, my Henrietta! he tells him he is informed of his intrigue, that he is aware of its conſequences, and therefore deſires he may inſtantly attend him; and think no more of the little artful gipſy, whoſe allurements would betray him to a breach of duty.

Alas! how little is he acquainted with my heart! but I will convince him of the injuſtice of his epithets! Am I then a traitreſs? have I attempted to ſeduce my Harry from his duty? O witneſs for me heaven, I would die rather than be the means of his acting in any reſpect unworthy of him; yet hard, very hard was the ſtruggle; had you known how I was tempted, you would have trembled for me.

With an attitude, and accent of the moſt endearing ſupplication, he begged I would conſent to become his wife, in the preſence of

of my father, and the counteſs of Jerſey. He told me he was poſſeſſed of 600 l. a year, independant of his father, and that with this proviſion, we might be happy in each other's ſociety and endearments.

He painted (ah! in what ſeducing colours) the charms, the tranquil delights of a rural retirement, enlivened by the tranſports of connubial happineſs, when preceded and continued by a union of hearts. His eyes too! —ah Henrietta!—but mine ſcarcely dared to meet their faſcinating glances. I ſtill tremble to think how nearly his too perſuaſive eloquence had overcome my reſolution.

Alas! he little knows how much that reſolution, of which he complains, has coſt me! but virtue at laſt roſe ſuperior to frailty, if it is frailty to love the moſt lovely of his ſex.

I oppoſed his arguments with all the firmneſs of which I was miſtreſs. What, ſaid I, ſhall I then bring down a father's curſe, where I would die to accumulate every bleſſing? O never, never! that would indeed be a baſe-

neſs

neſs unworthy of my Harry's Louiſa. I call heaven to witneſs, continued I, kneeling, of the vows I here make; though no arguments, no ſophiſtry ſhall ever prevail with me to accept your hand, unaccompanied by the ſanction of your father's conſent; yet neither ſhall any earthly conſideration bribe or compel me to become the wife of another.

He was greatly affected, he kneeled down beſide me. I will ſtrive, my angel, he cried, to imitate your ſhining example; farewell then, my only, my ever loved!—At that heart breaking word, I could no longer ſupport the appearance of my heroiſm; but reclining my head on his ſhoulder, I burſt into a violent fit of weeping. He too melted into tears; and we continued ſome time in that mourning attitude. At laſt I aroſe, and endeavoured to compoſe myſelf. Go then, my Harry, I cried, ſince you muſt depart, let it be while I have ſtrength left to bid you adieu. He obeyed, ſighing deeply; his eyes turned back, till he was out of ſight.

Fare-

Farewell, my beloved friend, will you not now acknowledge me an object of compaſſion? Ah, did you know how my heart is torn you would weep over the ſorrows of your unhappy

L. WYNDHAM.

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

The Counteſs of JERSEY to Miſs WALPOLE.

Jerſey Grove.

HE is gone!—my brother, my friend, my amiable companion, he has left me, my dear Emily!

That wretch, Haſtings, it is he that has fomented all this miſchief!

As ſoon as he was able to leave his bed, he haſtened to London, and calling on my father, informed him of the paſſion that his ſon entertained for our dear Louiſa; but painted it as no other than a boyiſh, and romantic attachment, eaſily to be overruled by the authority of a parent, and its object a ruſtic of mean birth, ſome beauty, great art, but no fortune.

In

In the firſt tranſports of his rage at this intelligence, he wrote a reproachful, and menacing letter to his ſon, with peremptory orders to prepare immediately to attend him, and never to think of this Louiſa any more.

Ah Emily, how vain, and how heart-rending are the commands of parents, when it is not in the power of children to obey!

When he was about to attend his father's pleaſure, he waited on Louiſa, he ſhewed her the earl's letter, he urged the impoſſibility of ever obtaining his conſent, and with all the pathetic rhetoric of an adored, kneeling, pleading, weeping lover, ſolicited her acceptance of his hand and yearly independence; but he kneeled, wept, and pleaded in vain; the generous maid, rejected his ſuit, with a dignity of ſentiment peculiar to himſelf, and ——I am interrupted,—a packet,—ah! 'tis from my lord, my huſband,——let me peruſe it.—

He is coming, my Emily! but not unaccompanied; his return reſtores to our arms

an aunt, a gem of women; I am at liberty to give you the particulars of her very affecting ſtay, but to make them the more intelligible to you, I muſt begin with a ſketch of the life and character of the late earl of Jerſey.

He was (though the father of my amiable huſband) a man of high paſſions, warm in his friendſhip, but equally implacable in his reſentments. His lady died in the twenty-fifth year of her age, my dear lord was their only ſurviving offspring, and poſſeſſed all the gentlenefs and ſenſibility of his mother, unallayed by the haughty and vindictive ſpirit of his father.

The earl had an only ſiſter younger than himſelf, finely accompliſhed, and of ſingular beauty, with a heart as eſtimable as her perſon was lovely.

The young earl of Arundel ſaw, and loved her, and waited on her brother with an offer of his hand and fortune, but was rejected on account of a quarrel, that had long ſubſiſted between the families.

The

The lovers, though prevented from ſeeing each other, kept up a regular correſpondence by letter, but were at laſt detected by the earl, who was ſo incenſed at his ſiſter's acting contrary to his injunctions, that he determined to carry her to France, bury her in a convent, and take ſuch farther precautions as ſhould effectually prevent their being ever united.

For this purpoſe he acquainted her that his affairs called him immediately into Paris, and that ſhe muſt prepare to accompany him; ſhe obeyed, unſuſpicious of the cruel intention of his journey, and was conſtrained to depart without ever bidding adieu to her lover.

He was quickly apprized of her departure, he ſuſpected the deep deſigning heart of her brother, he trembled for his miſtreſs, and determined to reſcue her or periſh in the attempt; and embarking for Calais, he arrived there the next day after the earl and his ſiſter had left it.

Mean while the unhappy unſuſpecting lady, had nearly reached the place of her deſtina-

tion. But in paſſing through a foreſt, they were attacked by a troop of banditti, their attendants maſſacred, and the earl himſelf left for dead on the field, while ſix of the ruffians carried off the lady, ſcreaming for help, though deſpairing to find it, when her lover, who had enquired the road through which they had travelled, came happily to her aſſiſtance at this alarming criſis: he inſtantly flew upon the villains, and ſeconded by his attendants, ſoon laid them dead at his feet; but who can deſcribe his tranſports, when he found that it was his Louiſa herſelf, whom he had reſcued from their fury. They embraced, he ſeated her beſide him, and they rode together to the next inn, procured a poſt carriage, and proceeded to Paris.

There they learned that the earl had been diſcovered by ſome peaſants of the country, and carried to the hotel de ——, when his wounds were dreſſed, and he was in a fair way of recovery.

The lovers now dreaded being again purſued and ſeparated, and the earl availed himſelf of this plea to perſuade his beloved to an union, which

which would put it paſt the power of her implacable brother to ſever them. Their hands were joined, and they retired to the ſouth of France; while the earl of Jerſey, weary of a fruitleſs ſearch for his ſiſter, returned to England, after an abſence of three years.

His ſon, though but then in his fourteenth year, was immediately provided with a tutor, and ſent abroad on his tour, and the earl was conſtrained to ſeek in the ſociety of ſtrangers, a conſolation for the loſs of thoſe connexions of which he had voluntarily deprived himſelf.

Still however he felt he was unhappy. His rank and large fortune procured him reſpect, but his overbearing diſpoſition prevented him from acquiring a ſingle friend, and he lived for ſeveral years in a ſtate of alternate diſſipation and gloomy reſtleſſneſs.

Lord Granville was juſt then returned from France, whither he had carried my mother for the recovery of her health, and I was taken home from ſchool on the occaſion.

Though

Though I had not been yet introduced into public, I frequently accompanied my mother to the theatre. One night at the tragedy of Edward and Elionora, I was ſo very much affected, and ſobbed ſo violently, that my mother was obliged to take me away. Lord Jerſey had been ſeated in the next box, and obſerved my emotion with pleaſure; he requeſted permiſſion to take care of me home, and declared he ſhould have more pleaſure in the artleſs effuſions of ſo young, and ſo feeling a heart, than the poet however elegant or affecting could beſtow.

My mother, who was acquainted with his name and quality, conſented; my father received him with politeneſs and acknowledgment, and gave him a general invitation to his houſe. From that time forward their acquaintance improved into intimacy, and ripened into a kind of friendſhip, but I was the particular favourite, and he at laſt propoſed to my father a union between their families, by my marriage with his ſon.

I had

I had often heard the earl talk in raptures of him, and I formed him to my fancy as deſerving his encomiums. I was not diſappointed in my expectations, but rather ſurprized at finding them exceeded, for he returned the moſt amiable and accompliſhed of any of his ſex that ever I had ſeen; and I had the pleaſure to find that he received the commands of his father with a tranſport as great as it was novel on the like occaſion.

We were united, and lived for ſix years in the greateſt harmony, and loved with the greateſt tenderneſs, when the earl was ſeized with a violent diſorder in his ſtomach, ſuppoſed to be the gout, which baffled the ſkill of the moſt eminent phyſicians. He continued to languiſh under it for upwards of a year, and at laſt finding his end approach, he acquainted his ſon privately of all the particulars I have already related reſpecting his ſiſter, and then proceeded.

About four years after my return from France, I was travelling through a dreary part of the country, when in paſſing a cottage I thought I heard the ſound of voices in the bittereſt

bitterest distress; I ordered the carriage to stop, I listened with attention, I alighted, and entering this habitation of wretchedness, I beheld (stretched on a bed of straw) a woman, to all appearance, in the agonies of death, while three half-famished children surrounded their dying mother, and wrung my heart with their clamours.

I ordered one of my servants to ride off for assistance and some matter of nourishment, while I endeavoured to appease the children by promises of speedy subsistence.

The servant soon returned, accompanied with a woman, with some cakes and cordials. We raised our patient in the bed, and cautiously administered the restoring draught. In a little time it brought her to herself, and she thanked and blessed me in terms that demonstrated her having been acquainted with much better days; the children too had satisfied the cravings of hunger, and as the next town was not far off, I proposed bringing her thither; she assented, we lifted her gently into the carriage, I followed with the children, and travelling

travelling at an eaſy rate, we ſoon reached the inn.

When I intimated a deſire of being acquainted with thoſe parts of her hiſtory which prudence did not oblige her to conceal; Alas! ſir, ſhe replied, there is nothing entertaining in my unhappy ſtory, 'tis nothing more than a narrative of the moſt ſhocking crimes, attended by the deepeſt contrition and remorſe.

I am a native of France, my mother died while I was an infant, and as ſoon as I became capable of inſtruction, my father placed me at a convent, and continued to viſit and ſupply me with the conveniencies of life till I was ſixteen, when I received an account of his death.

As he was an officer under the crown, all my means of ſubſiſtence ceaſed with his life; I was an orphan, I was deſolate, and the ſuperior conſtrained me to depart with very little ceremony.

Thus was I thrown upon the mercy of a world, of which I had yet ſcarcely formed an idea; I diſpoſed of all my little ornaments that were merchantable, tied the reſt in a handkerchief, and with tearful eyes, and a heavy heart, ſet out without knowing whither to direct my dreary ſteps.

I had the good fortune to be beloved by moſt of the young ladies who boarded at the convent. They followed me weeping, and we were juſt taking our laſt farewell, when overcome by the violent agitation of my ſpirits, I ſwooned away in their arms.

When I recovered, I found myſelf ſeated on a bank, my companions in tears around me, and by my ſide a young lady of exquiſite beauty, who aſſiſted to ſupport me, and ſeemed greatly affected by my ſituation. She had been paſſing in her carriage at the time of my fainting, and ſeeing me in diſtreſs, ordered the coach to ſtop, came out, and enquired the cauſe of ſo much lamenting; one of the ladies, who had been particularly attached to me, gave her a ſhort and pathetic account of my ſtory. It was ſufficient to her that I was innocent,

innocent, and an object of compaſſion, to intereſt her in my favour; ſhe told me, if I pleaſed, that ſhe would take me along with her, and that I ſhould attend and be her companion. Her goodneſs overpowered me, I dropped on my knees, and ſeizing her hands, I preſſed them to my lips, and burſt into tears.

Her eyes gliſtened, ſhe raiſed and embraced me, and leading me to the coach, ſhe made me get into it, ſeated herſelf beſide me, and away we drove.

The carriage ſtopped at a magnificent palace, a young and very handſome gentleman approached with a joyful impatience, and handed the lady out; he embraced, and tenderly complained of the length of her ſtay; ſhe ſmiled, and pointing to the carriage, where I ſat trembling and unaſſured, ſhe informed him in a few words of my ſtory.

My wife! my lovely wife! cried he, when ſhe had finiſhed, bleſſed be that power that informs your ſweet boſom with all his own divine propenſities and feelings; he then hand-

ed

ed me out, and his lady taking my arm, led me to the houſe, and treated me with the moſt engaging ſweetneſs and condeſcenſion; I afterwards learned my miſtreſs was the ſiſter of an Engliſh nobleman, from whoſe ſeverity, ſhe had eſcaped to her lover, and was now counteſs of Arundel.

Think, my dear ſon, what I muſt have felt at hearing that name mentioned—the concurrent circumſtances left me not the ſmalleſt doubt of its being that of the ſon of my moſt hated foe, and the huſband of my once beloved ſiſter; but I did not give the leaſt interruption to ſo intereſting a ſtory, and ſhe proceeded.

The earl and counteſs on the approach of winter, quitted their country ſeat, removed to Paris, and mixed in thoſe brilliant circles where they were ſo well qualified to ſhine.

Among the crouds of nobleſſe that frequented their houſe, thoſe with whom they were moſt intimately connected were Lord and Lady Sedley, a very amiable pair; Lady Sedley was (my miſtreſs excepted) the handſomeſt woman

I have

I have ever ſeen, and her lord was a man of worth and honour.

The earl of Arundel had two lovely children, a boy about three years old, and an infant daughter, who promiſed to ſurpaſs even her mother in beauty; Lord Sedley too had a ſon, nearly the ſame age as my maſter's, and he took a particular pleaſure in planning a future union between the children.

But I will haſten to that part of their ſtory, with which mine is moſt intimately connected.

There was a young nobleman, to whom Lord Sedley was very much attached, and whom he recommended to the acquaintance of the earl and counteſs, as a youth of the ſtricteſt honour, and the moſt amiable diſpoſition; his name was Villars; he was indeed diſtinguiſhed for the engaging ſweetneſs of his temper, the lovelineſs of his aſpect, and the graceful elegance of his perſon and addreſs.

From the firſt moment I beheld him, my heart became ſuſceptible of love; had it been equally alive to virtue, it would have combated, it would have ſuppreſſed the preſumptuous paſſion, but I was young, I was handſome, my temper too was romantic, nay worſe, it was proud, vindictive, and impetuous; I continued to love the count de Villars, and to flatter myſelf with a thouſand deluſive hopes, when I learned that he had paid his addreſſes to a young lady of great beauty and merit, daughter to the marquis de ——, and that a day not very diſtant, was fixed on for their nuptials.

This diſcovery would have been a ſufficient cruſh to the hopes of a genius leſs enterpriſing than mine; I directly formed a deſign of preventing their union. I found means to perſuade the count that his miſtreſs was unfaithful, and ſecretly encouraged the addreſſes of another; in ſhort, I managed the whole affair with ſo much art, that he not only broke off all connexion with her, but looked upon me as his guardian angel, that had kindly interpoſed between him and ruin; in conſequence of which, he gave me ſo many teſtimonies and

aſſurances

assurances of his gratitude, as encouraged me to venture on an avowal of my passion.

His eyes were instantly opened on my artifice, and I was rejected with the most mortifying disdain; he instantly flew to his mistress with redoubled tenderness, and obtained full pardon upon discovering the plots that had been machinated against them, and returning to the Countess, he acquainted her with my treachery, upon which she severely reprimanded, and was going to dismiss me; but my tears, my entreaties, my professions of remorse, and repeated promises of amendment prevailed on her gentle nature, to receive me again to favour.

My passion for the Count, was now converted into the most inveterate hatred, indignation, despair, and all the rage of disappointed love took possession of my whole soul, and prompted me to a quick and deadly revenge on the object of my detestation.

The Countess too, was destined to share in the malignity of my vengeance. I reflected that she was now clearly apprized of my wickedness,

edneſs, and I hated her for the opinion which ſhe muſt conſequently entertain concerning me. I was conſcious that ſhe ought to loath and deſpiſe me, and I determined to avenge myſelf of the miſchiefs, which I could not but ſuppoſe ſhe intended againſt me; horrid ſentiments! infernal ſuggeſtions! yet not unnatural to wretches ſo deeply depraved as I was at that juncture.

The Count's valet had long loved me, but had been rejected with a mixture of contempt and indignation; he continued, however, to teaſe me with his paſſion, and as I thought he might be uſeful towards furthering my revenge, I told him I had an affair of conſequence to tranſact, in which I ſhould have an occaſion for his aſſiſtance, and that provided he would bind himſelf by a ſolemn oath to ſecrecy, and obedience to my commands, I would engage to become his wife; he inſtantly complied, and I informed him of my hatred as well to his maſter, as my own miſtreſs, and made up an artful tale to juſtify my reſentment.

I told

I told him, that if ever he hoped to gain my affection, he muſt aſſiſt me to contrive ſome method of retorting my injuries on them both.

His attachment to his maſter made him heſitate at firſt, but finally, he engaged implicit compliance, and we mutually agreed to watch, and inform each other of every opportunity that ſhould appear favourable to our helliſh deſigns.

We had not waited long, when chance preſented us with one, the moſt apt to our purpoſe.

The Earl on his marriage with my miſtreſs, had given her his miniature ſet in diamonds, one of the brilliants fell out, as ſhe danced at a ball, ſhe perceived her loſs the next morning, and happening to mention it before the Count, he requeſted ſhe would honour him with the care of it, and he would have it immediately repaired.

I mentioned this incident to my accomplice, without thinking that we could derive any advantage

vantage from it, when he ſuddenly exclaimed, with a horrid tranſport, that he now had the means of effecting my vengeance to the utmoſt. He told me, that his maſter, had that day received a meſſage from mademoiſelle de ———, with a lock of her hair wrought, and ſet in the ſhape of an heart, in return to which he had wrote an acknowledging billet, and ſent it by him, with orders to deliver it into her own hands.

The Card ran thus——

My deareſt love,

I am quite unhappy that it is not in my power to attend and thank you in perſon, for your enchanting preſent; a croud of impertinents are aſſembled at my houſe, and without being abſolutely rude, I cannot make my eſcape from them. How mortifying?—and oh, how very dear is every inſtance of your affection, to the heart of your devoted

VILLARS.

As

As ſoon as I had peruſed it, he acquainted me with his plan, changed the cover, and directed it to the Counteſs of Arundel; he then ran to find the Earl, and throwing himſelf on his knees before him, with the greateſt appearance of contrition, he informed him, that his lady, and the Count de Villars, had long carried on a ſecret, and criminal correſpondence, that he had been the wicked inſtrument of their amours, but that his conſcience ſtrongly reproached him, for the part he had taken in their guilt, and he was determined to conceal it no longer. He delivered the note, which the Earl opened and read with violent agitation, and demanded of him what preſent it was which the Count received from his wife? The fellow denied any knowledge of it, but adviſed him to apply to me, as I, he obſerved, was queſtionleſs a confident in the affair.

The Earl endeavoured to reſtrain his paſſion, and ſent to have me inſtantly before him. I came; he ſtrictly interrogated me reſpecting every circumſtance of the ſuppoſed amour. I at firſt pretended a total ignorance of the matter, but, (as if intimidated by his threats) I at length

length confeſſed, that my miſtreſs had given his picture to the Count, as a proof of her affection for him, and her contempt of her Lord.

It would be equally needleſs and impoſſible to deſcribe the fury of the unhappy Earl; he flew to his wife, and ſternly demanded his picture; ſhe was terrified at the fierceneſs of his voice and aſpect, and tremblingly confeſſed to him the accident that it had met with, and that ſhe had given it to the Count to have it repaired.

Her anſwer confirmed his ſuſpicions; he ſhewed her the Count's letter, and reproached her with her baſeneſs, in terms that manifeſted at once his love, his rage, and his deſpair: ſhe did not hear him out, but dropped inſenſible on the floor.

Half frantic, he caught her in his arms, and called aloud for aſſiſtance. I entered, he left her to my care, and ruſhed out of the room.

I was

I was ſtruck with compaſſion and remorſe, when I beheld the lovely Counteſs, pale and breathleſs before me; but the miſchief was already done, and it was now too late to retract.

She continued ſo long in a ſtate of inſenſibility, that I thought ſhe would never recover, but at length, ſhe awoke to the moſt poignant ſenſations, yet ſtrove as much as poſſible to reſtrain the effuſions of her anguiſh. She enquired for her Lord, but he was not to be found, and ſhe retired to her chamber, leaving orders that none might attempt to diſturb her.

The Earl did not return till late, he entered with a ſullen gloom on his brow, and ſhut himſelf up in his ſtudy, where he paſſed the night in violent agitation, for we heard him frequently groan, and throw himſelf on the ground, then riſe, and traverſe the room at a furious pace.

He did not appear till the next day, when with a countenance expreſſive of a determined deſpair, he enquired for his Counteſs, and deſired

ſired to ſee her. I went to her anti-chamber, and tapped ſoftly at her door, no one anſwered, I opened it, but no one appeared. I continued my ſearch through the whole houſe, but could neither diſcover, nor learn any tidings concerning her.

I ran with this intelligence to the Earl; he ſtarted, he flew to her apartment, and eſpying a paper which had eſcaped my notice, folded and ſealed, and lying on her toilet, he haſtily tore it open, and ran over the contents.

As he proceeded, I obſerved that he trembled, and turned to a deadly paleneſs, drops of anguiſh gathered on his brow, he uttered a deep and heart-rending groan, and fell to the ground.

I ſcreamed for help, all the domeſtics entered, we raiſed and laid him on a bed, and uſed our utmoſt endeavours to recall him to life; at laſt he opened his eyes, and ſtaring wildly around, he ſtarted up and exclaimed,—where, where is the villain that has deceived me, that has robbed me of my wife, my love?—

fool

fool that I was, to give ear to his infernal malice. She is, ſhe muſt be innocent,—but yet; —ſuch accurſed, ſuch inconteſtable proofs of her guilt!—no, no,—it cannot be;—it is impoſſible, and that impoſſibility excludes every hope of any alleviation of my wretchedneſs.

Oh—that I could tear her for ever from my heart,—but it will not be, ſhe continues to cling around it, and pull it after her with an irreſiſtible attraction.

Here he threw himſelf proſtrate on the floor, he groaned, he wept, and riſing again, with a frantic eagerneſs, he caught up ſome of his Lady's ornaments that were ſcattered about the room, and preſſing them repeatedly to his lips and his boſom, he watered them plenteouſly with his tears.

It was now for the firſt time, that my heart was wrung with remorſe, my crime preſented itſelf in all its hideouſneſs to my ſhuddering imagination; I turned inward an eye of apprehenſive terror; but oh! what a gloomy, what a tremendous proſpect! I ſaw nothing but

but horrors, I felt nothing but deſpair, and I tore myſelf away from the preſence of my injured maſter, leſt I ſhould be tempted in a fit of deſperation to betray myſelf to the juſtice of his vengeance.

My wretched accomplice now claimed the promiſed reward of his treachery; my nature ſhrunk from the propoſal, but I alſo trembled at recollection of my own perfidy; I dreaded leſt a refuſal ſhould tempt him to betray me, and villain as he was, I ſought in him a refuge from the affrightments of conſcious gilt. We were married, and to avoid any queſtions that might lead to an explanation, we retired under a feigned name, to a private lodging, till the preſent ſtorm ſhould be overblown.

The generoſity of my miſtreſs had from time to time furniſhed me with many valuable preſents, which together with the ſavings of my ſalary, amounted to a conſiderable ſum. I urged my huſband to ſet up in ſome reputable trade that might procure us a livelihood, but his thoughtleſs diſſipated temper made him deaf to all my remonſtrances. Our ſtock was ſoon exhauſted, and our credit ſtretched to the utmoſt,

utmoſt, my huſband was daily threatened with impriſonment, and to avoid this laſt calamity we were obliged with our eldeſt boy, then an infant, to quit the kingdom, and take ſhelter in England.

To add to our diſtreſſes, the conſtant agitation of my mind, tortured with the pangs of excruciating recollection, preyed upon my ſpirits, and deſtroyed my health; a long and dangerous illneſs was the conſequence, and reduced us to the want of even the common neceſſaries of life. My huſband however, during my confinement, attended me with all the tenderneſs of which his nature was capable, and as ſoon as I was tolerably recovered, he procured me a means of ſubſiſtence in the houſe of a widow lady, where I was to act in capacity of waiting maid, and he was hired as valet to her only ſon, an officer in the army.

Here we lived till I was delivered of my two youngeſt children, when our young maſter was called abroad to join his regiment, and my huſband, at his requeſt accompanied him, and left me and my three little ones depend-

ing on the bounty of my miſtreſs, who promiſed to take care of them in the abſence of their father. But ſoon after his departure ſhe ſickened and died; her effects were all ſeized by a kinſman, in order, as he ſaid, to ſecure them againſt the return of her ſon; and I was once more thrown deſtitute upon the world.

Though my mind was inured to miſery, my limbs were not formed for fatigue, they failed me, and I fainted by the way; and but for your goodneſs, I and my children ſhould have periſhed in the cottage where your charity found us.

Here the unfortunate woman cloſed her narrative; during which I was ſcarcely able to conceal the various emotions of grief and joy, by which I was alternately agitated, grief for the ſufferings of a ſiſter, for whom my once tender affection was now renewed and redoubled, and joy at finding her innocent of the cruel aſperſions that had been thrown upon her character.

I deemed

I deemed it prudent however, to conceal the intereſt I took in her ſtory, though I determined to reward the relater for the pleaſure it had procured me; I preſented her with a purſe of twenty guineas, and aſked her in what manner ſhe intended to diſpoſe of it?

After a profuſion of thanks and bleſſings, and ſome deliberation, ſhe told me ſhe would try to improve her ſtock by ſetting up a little ſchool, as ſhe thought herſelf tolerably qualified for the purpoſe.

I approved of her ſcheme, and told her that as I was the diſtreſs of the unhappy earl and counteſs of Arundel, I would wiſh, if poſſible, to be a means of reconciling them, if ſhe could direct me where to find any of the parties concerned. But ſhe told me that all my ſearch in this kingdom would be ineffectual, as ſhe herſelf had made diligent enquiry after them, and could not hear of any nobleman of the title of Sedley in England, and was further aſſured that Lord Arundel was either dead or retired to ſome diſtant country, and could no where be found or heard of.

This was all the intelligence I could get; and leaving the poor woman to purſue her intentions, I returned home with a reſolution of travelling to France in queſt of my ſiſter; but the ill ſtate of my health prevented me from putting my plan into execution, and I make it my earneſt and dying requeſt ſince Providence has not been pleaſed to proſper my endeavours towards making her ſome recompence for my former cruel treatment of her, that you my ſon, who have youth, health, and ſtrength ſufficient for the undertaking, will ſpare no pains or coſt to effect her reſtoration and reunion, if not with the huſband, yet at leaſt with a family, whoſe tenderneſs I truſt, will in a manner conſole her under her misfortunes.

I will continue my narrative in my next, for the preſent I am tired ſcribbling, and muſt conclude my Emily's ever faithful

E. JERSEY.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

The ſame to the ſame.

Jerſey Grove.

I Sit down, my dear Emily, to perform my promiſe, and will begin without any further preface.

As ſoon after the earl's interment as decency would permit, my dear lord haſtened to obey his laſt commands. He left my brother for my guardian and companion till his return, and departed on his commiſſion.

All the letters which I received from him during his abſence, the laſt excepted, were filled with the accounts of his fruitleſs enquiries

ries after his unhappy kinſwoman; and having travelled moſt part of France in her ſearch, he was returning in deſpair of ever finding her, when Providence at a time, and in a manner the moſt unexpected, preſented him with the perſon whom he had ſo long been in queſt of.

The day, ſays he, on which I was ſo happy as to diſcover the retreat of the dear patient ſufferer, I was travelling through a beautiful though uncultivated part of the country, and as the weather was remarkably fine, I got out of my carriage, and deſired my ſervant to drive ſlowly onwards, as I choſe to walk a while, that I might have the better view of the ſurrounding proſpect.

As I frequently ſtood to admire the beauty of the country, the chaiſe had left me ſome diſtance behind, when in an inſtant the ſky was overcaſt, and I perceived a violent ſtorm approaching; I quickened my pace to overtake the carriage, and called aloud to the ſervant to ſtop, but before I could get up to them, the rain began, accompanied with thunder and light-

lightning, and I was compelled to take ſhelter in a ſmall but neat houſe that ſtood a few yards diſtant from the road.

The door was opened by an old domeſtic, who deſired I would walk in until the ſtorm ſhould be blown over, and uſhered me into the parlour. A lady roſe at my entrance, and welcomed me with a grace and dignity of manner, which I was ſurprized at finding in ſo obſcure an habitation. She was tall, elegantly formed, and dreſſed in mourning; ſhe ſeemed about forty, yet her face was, I think one of the fineſt I have ever ſeen, and there was a delicacy, a touching expreſſion of melancholy in her ſweet complacent countenance, that ſhewed her the beloved of ſorrow, and acquainted with an uncommon ſhare of the deepeſt afflictions.

My heart was ſoftened, was intereſted in this amiable ſtranger, I could not tell how to account for it.

I had not been long ſeated, when my carriage drove up to the court; as it approached, her

her colour changed to a death-like paleneſs, ſhe ſtarted up—Good God! it is the name:—the arms:—can it be poſſible?—Then turning to me with quickneſs,—Who, whence are you? ſhe cried,—tell me, tell me inſtantly? then ſinking into her chair, ſhe burſt into tears, and raiſing her hands and eyes to heaven, O my cruel, yet tenderly beloved brother! ſhe exclaimed, do you ſtill live? do you ſtill continue to hate your unhappy ſiſter?

O my aunt! I cried, with a ſhout of triumph,—my aunt! my long loſt, my much lamented aunt!—I ſtrained her to my boſom, but ſhe was inſenſible to my careſſes, ſhe had fainted quite away. I rung for aſſiſtance, a maid entered, and adminiſtered ſome drops; in a ſhort time ſhe opened her languid eyes, and fixed them with a melancholy wildneſs on my face.—Ah! do I dream? ſhe faintly cried, or is it poſſible that you can be—Your Richard, your nephew, my beloved aunt, interrupted I, who bleſſes God that has ſo happily directed his ſearch, and thinks all his pains a thouſand fold compenſated by the tranſport, the more than

than filial tenderneſs which he feels at this delightful interview.

She threw her dear arms round my neck, and wept upon it. Ah, my child, ſhe exclaimed, for, alas! I have now no other, is it then to ſeek me out that you have travelled hither? did you come to trace the forlorn one to the unfrequented ſpot where ſhe thought ſhortly to have laid herſelf and her ſorrows in the duſt? but who directed you where to find me? who could have vindicated my character to you, or told you that I was an object worthy of your ſearch?

In compliance to her deſire I gave her a ſhort but comprehenſive detail of the crimes, repentance, and confeſſion of the unhappy wretch who had betrayed her.

I was obliged to pauſe frequently in the courſe of my narrative, that ſhe might have time to recover in a meaſure from the violent agitations it occaſioned; when I had finiſhed, and ſhe was a little compoſed, ſhe aſked with a look of mournful curioſity, if I had heard

nothing of her lord; but no, (ſhe continued without waiting for my anſwer) he has doubtleſs retired like myſelf to ſome uninhabited wild, where his griefs for the imagined perfidy of his once beloved Louiſa has driven him; perhaps too, he is no more, that his ſorrows have put a period to his noble life,—and yet I have ſurvived, my God! thy reſtraining grace, thy ſuſtaining hand has ſupported me through anguiſh inexpreſſible, and my heart is not yet broke, nor has my hand ever once attempted to cloſe this wretched exiſtence.

But ſuppoſe that my beloved ſtill lives, think you he would give credit to the ſtory of my innocence, or that I could a ſecond time ſupport the ſeverity of that brow, the killing indignation of thoſe eyes that were wont to melt over me with ſuch unutterable fondneſs? O the days, the days of tranſport I have experienced, but they are long ſince paſt, and as I once was bleſſed, ſo I now am wretched in the extreme.

But ſoft! what have I been ſaying? ungrateful wretch that I am, ought I not rather

to

to pour forth my thanks to the all-merciful Being, who has at length brought my innocence to light, and ſent my Richard to alleviate my ſorrows; but, alas! the alienation of my huſband's affections, and the loſs of my children, are griefs, that like the rod of Moſes, ſwallow up every other conſideration, and ſcarcely leave room in my heart for any other emotion of joy or ſorrow to enter.

At the mention of her children, I recollected that the unhappy penitent in the ſtory of her crimes, had ſcarcely informed me of any thing concerning them, and I ventured to aſk my aunt what was become of them.

She told me that at the time ſhe parted from her huſband, her little daughter was an infant at nurſe, but the boy being two years older had been taken home, and was ſo very engaging, and ſo particularly attached to her, that ſhe could not leave him with every other comfort behind her, but took him and an old faithful domeſtic as partners of her exile, together with a large quantity of her jewels, to enable her to educate her child as ſhe could wiſh,

wiſh, that ſhe had left a letter behind, informing her lord of what ſhe had done, but not of the place of her retreat, and retired in diſguiſe, and under a feigned name to a convent, where ſhe lived with her little boy till he was of an age capable of inſtruction.

She then had a tutor provided, and maſters to inſtruct him in whatever ſciences or accompliſhments might improve the natural goodneſs of his mind and graces of his perſon; ſhe endeavoured for his ſake to be as much reſigned as poſſible, and in return found in him a conſolation for every other affliction; but of him too ſhe was bereft, and at a time when ſhe leaſt expected ſuch a ſtroke.

He had frequently queſtioned her concerning his father; ſhe endeavoured to evade his enquiries, but the tears and the emotion which they occaſioned, and which ſhe ſtrove in vain to ſuppreſs, increaſed his eagerneſs to come at the truth; at laſt he prevailed upon the domeſtic that accompanied their flight to inform him, the conſequence was no other than what the counteſs expected, his young heart was agitated, it was filled with a thouſand emoti-

ons

ons of grief, reſentment, honour, and filial tenderneſs; he had always a violent propenſity to the army, and the diſcovery he had lately made augmented; it he would go, he would voluntarily offer himſelf to the ennobling ſervice of his king and country (for he was taught to believe himſelf French, as he had not been informed of his mother's real name, or her hiſtory preceding her marriage with Lord Arundel); he would ſignalize himſelf, he would acquire fame, honour, and wealth, and raiſe his mother to a rank ſuperior to what ſhe had ever held, and that would exalt her merit to its deſerts, and make her virtue as well as beauty conſpicuous to the world, and to the huſband who had ſo cruelly injured her.

In vain did the Counteſs endeavour to moderate his ardour, he appeared to be convinced, but finally forſook her. My unhappy aunt was deeply affected at his loſs, but ſupported herſelf with the hopes that he might ſoon return in ſafety, perhaps with wealth and honours, but paint to yourſelf her diſtraction, when in a ſhort time after his departure ſhe heard

heard that he was killed at the battle of Fontenoy.

She languiſhed for a length of time under a ſevere and lingering illneſs, which the ſhock of this dreadful intelligence occaſioned, but heaven was pleaſed to reſerve her for the enjoyment of many bleſſings which I truſt it has yet in ſtore for the ſweeteſt, meekeſt, loveliеſt, and moſt exalted of its votaries; as I make no doubt but we ſhall, by ſome means or other, be able to diſcover the retreat of lord Arundel, and reſtore the dear wanderer to his arms. But to proceed.

At the time the counteſs firſt took ſhelter at the convent de ——, ſhe got particularly acquainted with, and attached to a widow lady of ſmall fortune, and her daughter, who both boarded there; they were amiable, and from a ſimilarity of their diſpoſitions to her own, they became intimate and affectionate friends. Soon after her recovery, ſome diſſenſions ariſing in the convent, made her continuance in it extremely diſagreeable, and the daughter of her friend having juſt then been married to a worthy

worthy young man, this amiable family entreated her to accompany them to a beautiful little eſtate which they poſſeſſed in this retired part of the country, and here they lived together for ſeveral years with the greateſt harmony; but nothing could rouſe the unhappy counteſs from the deep dejection of ſpirit into which her manifold misfortunes had thrown her, and ſhe could not be prevailed upon to accompany her friends on a viſit to a relation's houſe in Paris, where they went about a month ago, and left her miſtreſs of the manſion till their return, which ſhe expected in a week at fartheſt; and then ſhe conſents to reviſit with me her native land.

Here ends the hiſtory of the moſt amiable, but moſt unfortunate of her ſex. Good God, my Emily! I once thought it impoſſible for humanity to ſupport ſuch deep and repeated ſtrokes of affliction, for mere humanity it certainly was; but I truſt that the ſweet ſaint will yet even in this world receive the reward of her piety and patience.

I expect her in leſs than a fortnight. I ſhould be too happy but for the very great ſhare which my

my affection conſtrains me to take in the diſtreſs of my amiable brother and his lovely miſtreſs; I wait with anxiety the arrival of to-morrow, for that will certainly bring me ſome intelligence from him. God grant it may be favourable to his wiſhes, and thoſe of your

E. JERSEY.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Woodville.

COurage, my dear Louiſa, all may yet be well, I do not apprehend that matters are ſo bad as you may imagine; be aſſured it is no more than I have this long time expected, from my knowledge of Lord Granville's diſpoſition; after all, his rejection of your Henry's ſuit may be but temporary, even ſhould he at preſent be deaf to his pleading, but that is yet a doubt with me, he loves his ſon almoſt to adoration, beſides he is generous, and has a heart all alive to the feelings of humanity. This account of him I learned from Lady Wilmot, our near and very agreeable neighbour, and next to yourſelf, my moſt amiable

ble and intimate friend; ſhe correſponds with the counteſs, and tells me ſhe is indeed a moſt charming woman, lovely in her perſon, but ſtill more amiable in her diſpoſition and deportment. I truſt that her ſoft authority, joined to the rhetoric of your Henry, will have a very happy influence in your favour.

My brother and St. Alnais are not yet returned, but are expected in a few days. What ſhall I ſay to you, my friend? ſhall I own that I am not myſelf ſince their departure? nothing can employ, nothing can amuſe me, I rattle over the keys of my harpſichord, but either that, or my fingers, or my heart, or ſomething is out of tune; I go to tranſlate my Metaſtaſio, but ſtudy makes my head ache; I draw, but my pencil runs awry; I am tired of my work, of my book, and ſtill more of ſauntering about the houſe; what can be the matter with me? I wiſh my brother was returned,—huſh! I hear a carriage,—'tis he himſelf as I live, and with him,—bleſs me! how my heart flutters. I am called, what will become of me? I am all over in a tremor.

—I

—I muſt go, farewell, pray heaven I acquit myſelf tolerably,—now for it—

Oh, ruined and undone Louiſa! never was poor creature ſo awkward, ſo fooliſh, ſo mortified; but I will tell you how like an idiot I have behaved.

I had not got half my way down, when I felt myſelf tremble, and my colour riſe to ſuch a degree, that I was obliged to ſtop awhile, and try at a little compoſure; but my unlucky brother ran up, and ſeeing me ſtand heſitating and confuſed, he laughed in my face, and ſeizing my hand, pulled me down ſtairs.

St. Alnais was ſtanding in the hall. Edward brought me forward with an air of ceremonious drollery, and preſented me to him, he bowed diſtant and reſpectful, I curtſied low, my brother laughed at us both.—What is the matter with you? cried he: why one would imagine you had never ſeen each other before? Harriet, my dear, this is Monſieur St. Alnais, my very good friend.—Sir, my ſiſter Harriet, a mighty lively, agreeable, ſpirited girl.

St.

St. Alnais ſmiled and took my hand, I am ſure he muſt have felt it tremble, for I was ready to ſink with confuſion; he raiſed his eyes to my face with a look of ſurprize, and I thought of tenderneſs,—but it might have been a miſtake.—I was mad at myſelf for having betrayed ſo much emotion, yet ſince it was too evident to eſcape his obſervation, he might have appeared happy at it, or grateful, or —ſomething,—nay I would not have had him preſume to be ſaucy, or take airs on the occaſion neither; but,—but—in ſhort,—I was not half ſatisfied with him, nor indeed with myſelf, and as for Edward I declare I almoſt hate him. I had no idea of their returning ſo ſuddenly, it was the ſurprize that threw me ſo much off my guard,—what have I ſaid? off my guard. Alas! that is now of no further conſequence, than to conceal as much as poſſible the appearance of my affection, for the poor bird is already flown, and I am yet doubtful of the reception it will meet with from its new poſſeſſor.

Deuce take this myſterious creature; if he ſhould not love me now after all,—how mortifying!

tifying!—and yet it is not impoſſible—I don't know what to think.

We are to ſet out for London next week; farewell, my ſweet Louiſa. I hope I need not remind you how anxious I ſhall be till I hear from you again.

H. ROCHDALE.

LET-

LETTER XXXII.

Lord MORDAUNT to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Berkley Square.

WHAT ſhall I ſay?—how ſhall I write?—my lovely, my beloved Louiſa, my heart is almoſt broke.—I have kneeled, pleaded, and entreated in vain, my father continues inexorable, and your Henry is undone.

That villain Haſtings!—may the curſes of his own malevolent heart be his puniſhment! My father acknowledges that he was the infamous detractor, and now deſpiſes him for his

his perfidy. It was with difficulty that I could get him to liſten to me at all on the ſubject of my paſſion; but I conceived great hopes from his being ſo very much affected with that part of my narrative, in which I endeavoured to do juſtice to the nobleneſs of my lovely girl's conduct, and the cruel generoſity with which ſhe rejected my propoſal; 'twas to no purpoſe that he ſtruggled to ſuppreſs the riſing emotion, and he juſt then put me in mind of ſome beautiful lines in that very elegant old ballad of the *Child of Elle.*

The Baron ſtroked his dark brown hair,
And turned his face aſide,
To wipe away the ſtarting tear
He proudly ſtrove to hide.

At laſt he exclaimed, So then ſhe refuſed you, actually refuſed you; ha!—that was noble! noble indeed! but proud though, very proud! and yet I can hardly think ſhe rejected you, Harry. But it muſt be ſo, I know you would not deceive me; ſhe is a generous girl, indeed; and were ſhe but your

equal

equal in birth, I ſhould caſt aſide every pecuniary conſideration, and would not wiſh for a mate more worthy of my Harry. I am obliged to her too, as I think, more ſo than I am to you, honeſt friend, for your duteous project; but I forgive you, my child, becauſe I love you. I love her too, and would gladly contribute to her happineſs, but not at the expence of my honour; leave me for the preſent. I ſhall reſume the ſubject another time, but I poſitively command you to think as little of your Louiſa as poſſible, or at leaſt to reſtrain your fondneſs within the bounds of friendſhip; in that I myſelf would willingly be your rival: you may eſteem her as a friend, you may love her as a ſiſter, in that light, but in no other, can I ever look upon her as my daughter.

I bowed, ſighed, and withdrew.

O that you had been leſs an angel, my Louiſa! but I ſhall offend; forgive me my love, and I will ceaſe, if poſſible, to murmur at your too generous reſolution.

My

My mother is juſt returned, ſhe was from home when I arrived, I fly to meet her. Farewell, my heart's beſt beloved,

Your own

H. MORDAUNT.

LETTER XXXIII.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Lord MORDAUNT.

Dove-brook.

ALL then is over, my Harry, not the moſt diſtant ſhadow of hope remains; my own ſorrows I could have borne, but you too are unhappy; yes I know, I feel that you are. I ſhould be guilty of the baſeſt ingratitude, could I doubt for a moment of your affection,—why, alas! did we ever meet: and O why was the conſequence love? gratitude, friendſhip,—could not they have ſufficed? amiable, tender, but ſeducing ſemblances, I thought that theſe alone had taken poſſeſſion of my heart and yielded it up with a pleaſed precipitance, to the dear yet fatal deluſion.

Why

I Why ſhould we ſhame to acknowledge a virtuous paſſion;—it is my pride, and glory to have inſpired it in the breaſt of the moſt amiable of men; and my Harry, I alſo know the ineſtimable value of that heart, and return its affections with a tenderneſs that I bluſh not to avow; but, alas! to what purpoſe do I love? to what purpoſe am I beloved, ſince nothing but miſery can enſue, not only to myſelf but to one who is infinitely dearer.

Ceaſe to importune your father, I beſeech you, I am aſſured he will never conſent, and a too frequent repetition of your requeſt, might provoke his reſentment, perhaps his curſe.—Oh!—ſpare me, ſpare me the reality of ſuch horrors,—indeed, my Harry, I could not bear it, I ſhudder at the very idea.

Fly, rather fly this fatal wretch, who involves in his own miſery the deareſt object of her affections, periſh firſt unhappy Louiſa! Indeed I ever held myſelf unworthy of your love, it was too great a happineſs for me to aſpire to; ceaſe then to love me, my Harry,—ceaſe to think of me,—hold my heart,—what have I ſaid? forget me, fly me, ceaſe to love me;—

could I bear that?—yes,—yes;—I think I could,—I may be wretched in the extreme, but I will not be criminal.

Adieu! may every bleſſing that Providence has in ſtore for virtue, be ſhowered on the head and expanded in the heart of my Harry, whatever is the fate of his

LOUISA.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

Lord MORDAUNT to Miſs WYNDHAM.

Berkley Square.

WHAT a cruel, what a heart-breaking letter was yours!——Shall I then forget you? ſhall I ceaſe to love my Louiſa? heavens! what a queſtion? ſhall exiſtence ceaſe to be enamoured of happineſs? Every ſpecies of calamity, of loſs, ſickneſs, pain, torture and death, the ſoul intrenched in her own fortitude can think of without emotion, but the loſs of you, my Louiſa!——it is not to be fathomed,——I grow dizzy, I ſicken, I ſhrink from the precipice, the thought leaves creation empty.

You

You tell me you have not a doubt of my affection, and yet imagine it poſſible to be eradicated; you deſire me to fly you, to forget you; you conclude that time, accident, and above all, the authority of a parent, will have power to chaſe you from my breaſt,—never, never, my Louiſa! my paſſion for you fills my whole ſoul, and leaves no room for any future attachment to any thing, ſave yourſelf, upon earth; age cannot obliterate, time cannot impair it; it is twined into, it is become one with my exiſtence, and when I ceaſe to love my Louiſa, that moment I ceaſe to be.

'Tis true, a father's command is ſacred, and his perſon inexpreſſibly dear to my heart; but were he to propoſe an alienation of my affections from my beloved, and beſtow upon me in return all that the world contains and eſteems, of power to confer happineſs, and to fill up the expanſion of every wiſh that the human heart can form, they would in vain court my acceptance, when rivaled by an intereſt in the boſom of my Louiſa. Let him put my obedience to the trial; I am ready to ſacrifice wealth, honour, dignities, titles, even life itſelf with pleaſure, if his ſafety required it;

it; any thing, all things but my Louiſa, without whom exiſtence would be inſupportable.

The heart is free, it is voluntary, no force can compel it, no intereſt can bribe it, it tramples upon treaſure, it looks down upon ſtation; in nature, in humanity, in friendſhip, and in love, the heart is the fountain of ſentimental delights, the only ſource of all enjoyments that are worthy of man; were I poſſeſſor of the univerſe, were I even poſſeſſed of my Louiſa, did I deem myſelf at the ſame time an alien to her heart, the world and Louiſa would be no more to her Harry, than earth is to the cameleon who lives upon air; and all the wealth or honours that this world can beſtow are of no ſignification or importance to me, but as a means to attach the perſon of my bleſſing to the ſacred and diviner poſſeſſion of her heart.

I do not yet deſpair of accompliſhing that bliſsful union; a letter from my ſiſter, filled with the praiſes of my Louiſa, joined to the interceſſion of his amiable counteſs, has ſoftened my father's heart in our favour; his reſolution is ſtaggered, he wiſhes to ſee you; for what

what purpoſe I am ignorant, but I hope every thing. He ſays he would invite you hither, but that he ſuppoſes you are too proud to accept of his invitation; ſurely when he is thus intereſted by the bare deſcription of your excellence, at your appearance every objection muſt vaniſh. My Louiſa,—might I dare to propoſe,—you underſtand me,—conſider, my angel, that the certain happineſs or miſery of my life depends on the reſult of my father's determination; my mother herſelf, if you conſent, will go down and attend you hither; I know you are capable of ſacrificing a great deal, where the happineſs of the perſon that you love is at ſtake; I feel alſo moſt ſenſibly the many reaſons which punctilio, delicacy, and a conſciouſneſs of worth would urge againſt your compliance with a requeſt which I hardly dare to make; but O, if indeed you love your Harry, let the tranſporting hope that the event may ſucceed to our wiſh, obliterate every other conſideration.

On my knees I entreat you will uſe your utmoſt intereſt with my honoured friend and inſtructor, to obtain if poſſible his conſent; but there is the doubt, there is the dread, leſt

leſt a ſenſe of honour, and a pride that is but too well juſtified ſhould influence him to reject the only means that opens a proſpect of happineſs to your Harry. I ſhall wait your anſwer with the moſt anxious ſuſpenſe, I will not tell you, becauſe it is impoſſible to expreſs the eſteem, the love, the warmth of paſſion that glows in the heart of your

H. MORDAUNT.

LETTER XXXV.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

WHAT a hand, trembling, and ſcarcely able to hold the pen! I ſit down to inform my Henrietta of my preſent embarraſſing ſituation.

This morning I received a letter from Lord Mordaunt, expreſſive of the warmeſt eſteem and the moſt paſſionate regard; he ſeems to think Lord Granville will yet conſent to our union; he relents, he wiſhes to ſee me, but thinks me too proud to accept of his invitation, though his counteſs would herſelf be the bearer of it, and accompany my father and myſelf to London. My Harry urges my compliance in the moſt delicate manner you can imagine; ſurely there is nothing which virtue would permit, that I would not ſacrifice with tranſport to his happineſs, and Lord Granville

ville muſt think me proud indeed, ſhould I reject a ſolicitation that does me the higheſt honour.

But I know not what to think of my father's conduct on this occaſion, nor can I account for his agitation and extraordinary expreſſions.

I encloſe to you copies of Lord Mordaunt's letters, which I put together this morning into my father's hands. As he peruſed the firſt I obſerved his countenance change, and that he aſſumed a look of more haughtineſs than ever I had ſeen him put on; he returned me the letters, frowned, bit his lip, and traverſed the room, as if violently agitated with ſome ſtrange emotion; at laſt he approached me with a haſty ſtep, and ſeizing my hand, "They may be miſtaken, my Louiſa, cried he, they may yet find you a mate for a princely conſort, and that your alliance would ennoble inſtead of debaſing them." What could he mean, Henrietta?—I was ſo terrified, ſo ſtruck with his air and manner, but above all with his expreſſions, that I had not power to reply, but preſented him with my Harry's laſt letter, which he had not yet read.

He

He appeared pleaſed with the warmth of affection which every line of it conveyed, but when he came to that part which contains Lord Granville's invitation, he ſtarted, ſeemed to ponder a while, as on ſome important event, and ſuddenly retired.

I have not ſeen him ſince, he has been upwards of an hour alone in his ſtudy, and I immediately took up the pen to give you an account of his very myſterious conduct, a thouſand ideas ruſh upon my mind, I am perplexed, I am aſtoniſhed, I know not what to think.

But ſtill remain my Henrietta's moſt affectionate

L. WYNDHAM.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

The Counteſs of JERSEY to Miſs WALPOLE.

Jerſey Grove.

MY Emily, they are arrived,—the tedious hours of abſence are at length elapſed, and my beloved Lord is reſtored to the arms of his happy Eliza.

My aunt too, but how ſhall I deſcribe her to you?—in what language ſhall I paint the gentle reſignation, the meek endurance of grief that is pourtrayed in her angel face? which is (our ſweet Louiſa excepted) the loveliеſt I have ever ſeen; nay, there is a reſemblance too, and that as ſtriking as to ſurprize me; then her form is harmony itſelf, and her voice tuned to a cadence that is even affect-

affectingly ſweet; dear amiable ſufferer, my Emily—it ſhall be the delightful ſtudy of my life, to be the comfort and conſolation of hers; my attention, my affectionate aſſiduity, ſhall win her from the recollection of her griefs, and ſooth her gentle boſom to peace, if, as I very much fear, it ſhould never be ſuſceptible of happineſs.

I juſt ſnatch a few moments to inform you of their arrival, while my lord is peruſing the packet that Mrs. Chalmers deſired ſhould be given to him. I wonder what it can contain? there was ſomething very myſterious in that woman, and I own myſelf not only curious but impatient to know the purport of her manuſcript.—Farewell for a moment, now for the contents of this extraordinary packet.

I am tranſported,—I ſcarcely breathe, my head is almoſt giddy with this exceſs of happineſs.—Gracious God, how juſt, how wonderful are thy diſpenſations!—our Louiſa,—ſhe is no other than the daughter, and her father the much deceived, and long lamented huſband of the counteſs of Arundel.

Mrs.

Mrs. Chalmers, (O may her ſufferings and repentance be accepted as an atonement of her crimes,) ſhe was the guilty but unfortunate wretch, who betrayed the beſt of miſtreſſes, the moſt amiable of women! I have already given you her hiſtory, as related by the father of my lord, what remains of it from the time ſhe parted from him is totally unintereſting, ſuffice it to ſay, that by a ſeries of misfortunes ſhe was again reduced to the ſtate of miſery in which the ſweet compaſſion of our Louiſa found her.

Thou gracious power, that has ſo wonderfully conduced thy lovely votary to happineſs, prepare her heart to receive, and endue her with ſtrength to ſuſtain it. Indeed, my friend, I know not how to act in this perplexing particular,—the ſurprize, the joy, the ſudden tranſition from the depth of miſery to the higheſt tranſport! ſhe will never, I fear, be able to ſupport it, but the diſcovery muſt be made, let the conſequence be what it will, and I go to hazard the trial.——

I thank God, it is over, and ſhe ſtill lives, —lives to happineſs, to rapture. By the gentleſt

tleſt degrees I unfolded myſelf to her, and ventured to diſcloſe to her view the dazzling proſpect of the bliſs that awaited her. As I went on, her pulſe, her very breath was ſuſpended, while her ear drank in with eager tranſport every word that I uttered; at laſt ſhe dropped on her knees, and cloſing her eyes, and raiſing her trembling hands, ſhe attempted an ejaculation of thanks, but fainted quite away.

When her ſenſes returned, ſhe threw her dear arms round my neck, and claſped me to her boſom, while tears of joy and gratitude deprived her of the power of utterance. She knows not yet how ſmall a diſtance divides her from the beloved of her heart; I have told her that her huſband and daughter ſtill live, and are in this kingdom, but did not dare to venture any farther. It will require the niceſt circumſpection to manage their interview in ſuch a manner, as to prevent its being fatal to them both.

All my cares are now vaniſhed. My brother and his Louiſa will be happy, as every obſtacle to their union is removed; but I will not

not inform my father that it is ſo, as I have ſome reaſon to hope that he will conſent to her becoming his daughter, even while he thinks her diveſted of every advantage that he formerly deemed of eſtimation.

Yours ever and ſincerely,

E. JERSEY.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

Miſs WYNDHAM to Miſs ROCHDALE.

Dove-brook.

O My beloved Henrietta, rejoice with your Louiſa; my mother——I have found a mother, my friend, and oh!—ſuch a one!—but you ſhall hear.—

Yeſterday morning my father received a meſſage from Lady Jerſey, informing him that the Earl was returned, and requeſted to ſee him immediately and alone, as he had ſome matters to communicate that concerned him very nearly.

My

My father inſtantly obeyed the ſummons, and did not return till evening; he entered with an air of triumph, he flew towards me, and caught me in his arms. Weep no more, my Louiſa, he exclaimed, be well, be happy; prepare your heart for a diſcovery, that will fill, that will oppreſs it with delight, prepare it for the reception of a mother, my child, the deareſt, the tendereſt of mothers, that lovely, that beloved wife, whom I have ſo long lamented as loſt, all gracious Providence has at length reſtored her to us, and ſhe waits with eager impatience to behold you.

Paint to yourſelf my emotions, I was almoſt breathleſs with ſurprize and joy; my father ſupported me trembling to the carriage, the horſes flew like lightning, and ſtopped in a few moments at Jerſey Grove.

He led me into the parlour, his countenance glowing with delight. I felt myſelf all over agitated, in a manner that I know not how to deſcribe, and did not dare to lift up my eyes, till I heard a voice exclaim in maternal muſic, Ah! it is ſhe!—my heart tells me

me it can be no other than my Louiſa; I fainted in her arms, while they ſtrained me to her boſom, but returning ſenſe reſtored me to the dear delight of beholding her.

Oh, my Henrietta!——but I have not yet told you all. I may look up without preſumption to my Harry. Lord Granville will no longer heſitate at giving his conſent, that I ſhall be bleſſed in the power of imparting happineſs to my beloved. I encloſe you a packet, which contains my mother's hiſtory, and I will unfold to you a ſeries of moſt aſtoniſhing events, by which you will find that my father is no longer Mr. Wyndham, but Henry Earl of Arundel, with a fortune of at leaſt 30,000 l. per ann. O that my brother was living to inherit it.——A ſudden thought has juſt now ſtruck me; your St. Alnais, your lover, was not he ſuppoſed to have been killed at the battle of Fontenoy? and did not he alſo tear himſelf away from the arms of an adoring parent? of a mother too——Gracious powers!—if it ſhould be ſo?—But now I recollect, the name which my mother aſſumed was not St. Alnais, but De Rouviere; yet

might

might he not have altered his name for a thousand reaſons? Write I entreat you inſtantly, and reſolve me.—

Yours ever

LOUISA.

LET-

LETTER XXXVIII.

The ſame to the ſame.

Dove-brook.

BLESS me! my dear Henrietta! what can be the meaning of your ſilence? not a line have I had from you ſince you left the country,—happy as I am at preſent, the bare idea of your being involved in any diſtreſs, fills my heart with the moſt dreadful apprehenſions, but yet I hope they are without foundation.

I ſhall be with you ſhortly; the Earl and Counteſs of Jerſey inſiſt on our accompanying them to London, where they will introduce my father to Lord Granville, not as Earl of Arundel, but plain Mr. Wyndham. There is a circumſtance, though in their plot, which diſtreſſes me a good deal; my Harry, they ſay, muſt not be made acquainted with our happi-

neſs.

neſs. They will have it that his ſurprize and joy will be the greater, if the diſcovery is not made till he firſt receives Lord Granville's conſent to his union, with plain, ſimple Louiſa, untitled, undiſtinguiſhed by any favours of fortune; theſe reaſons are very inſufficient to me, however I muſt acquieſce.

I entreat you will write an immediate anſwer to this, or I ſhall not be here to receive it, as we ſet out for London in a very few days.

Your own

LOUISA WINGROVE.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Lady LOUISA WINGROVE.

O MY Louiſa, my lovely friend, blame not my ſilence, impute it not to want of affection; alas! it is with grief, with agony of heart, that your entreaties at laſt conſtrain me to write, to daſh your cup of happineſs with the intelligence I muſt impart.

My St. Alnais—ah, my God!—he is dying,—the gentleſt, the ſweeteſt, the nobleſt,—oh! my breaking heart!—and he loved me too,—loved me but too well,—how could I ſuppoſe that he did not?—circumſtanced as he was, how could he have acted otherwiſe than he did?

This

This long time I have obſerved an increaſing languor and dejection on his ſpirits, indeed they always ſeemed oppreſſed by ſome mental malady, but within theſe few weeks paſt, his health has been viſibly declining; however he appeared to do his utmoſt to conceal it, and accompanied us to town with a chearfulneſs more conſtrained than I had ever known it before.

The day after our arrival, my brother called me aſide, Tell me, Henrietta, ſaid he, what are your thoughts of my friend? I believe I can gueſs at them pretty nearly already, but it is now neceſſary that I ſhould be aſſured of your real ſentiments concerning him.—Forgive me, my ſiſter, (for he obſerved by my colouring and confuſion, that I was not prepared for the queſtion,) I would not wiſh to offend your delicacy, but I cannot bear to ſee my friend unhappy; he loves you with an ardour as generous as it is tender: 'tis true he never made me the confident of his affection, but then is not his reſerve in that particular, a convincing proof of his honour, when his look, his air, the involuntary glow of his cheek, and ſoftened tenderneſs of his voice

and manner whenever he approaches or addreſſes you, are undoubted indications of a paſſion, which I ſee he is determined to die rather than reveal, leſt its motive ſhould be miſtaken for a ſordid baſeneſs, of which he is incapable, or that he ſhould hazard the repulſe which he deems due to his temerity.

Permit me then to make him a propoſal, which I doubt not he will accept with the greateſt tranſport. I will tell him that I have this long time obſerved what he took ſuch pains to conceal, and that I will take it upon myſelf to reconcile my father to your union, and leave it to him to ſolicit your conſent.

But, my deareſt Edward, cried I, is it not poſſible that you may be miſtaken reſpecting his regard for me, and then how mortifying to be rejected?—O fear not for that, my ſiſter, replied he, I am as confident of the ſtrength of his affection for you, as I am of my own exiſtence. Here he haſtily left me, though I called after him repeatedly to return.

I retired to my chamber in a frame of mind which it is impoſſible to deſcribe, and waited

the event with the moſt anxious impatience; evening came, but no news from Edward. My father and mother were from home, and upon the ſummons to tea, I met him alone in the parlour, his countenance was clouded with chagrin, and I almoſt feared to aſk him what was become of his friend. I underſtand that queſtion, my dear Henrietta, replied he; I was not miſtaken, he loves you with the moſt paſſionate fondneſs, yet he rejects the only means by which he can ever hope to become yours. It was with the moſt lively gratitude he heard, and with the deepeſt anguiſh he ſeemed conſtrained to refuſe his acquieſcence in the propoſal I made him, yet paſſion blinded me at the time to the ſingular nobleneſs of his conduct, and I fearI reſented with too much harſhneſs my diſappointment; he wept, he preſſed me in his arms, he acknowledged that he loved you from the firſt moment he beheld you, that his paſſion increaſed with his knowledge of your diſpoſition, to an ardency that was by much too great for his peace, that it had already made him miſerable, but ſhould never make him baſe, and that you ſhould at leaſt have no reaſon to deſpiſe him for meanly taking advantage of a generoſity (which perhaps

might draw upon me my father's ſevereſt indignation) to ſteal into an alliance of which he was unworthy.

I was provoked, diſappointed, my pride was hurt, and the firſt wiſh of my heart was fruſtrated. I replied with pique, What then! you chuſe to hold me under eternal obligations! and do not think I even merit the pleaſure of being grateful,—you reject my ſiſter too, ſhe is it ſeems unworthy your acceptance; tell not me of your paſſion, you never loved her, but it is very well, ſir,—I do not deſire that you ſhould at all conſtrain your inclinations in this reſpect, for be aſſured I am too conſcious, and too proud of my Harriet's perfections to force them upon the notice of any man. He ſeized my arm, with a look of diſtraction, he would have ſpoke, but I tore myſelf from him, and flung haſtily out of the room.

I have now confeſſed to you, my deareſt ſiſter, the faultineſs of my conduct, and muſt have a promiſe of your forgiveneſs, ſince my affection for you alone was the cauſe of my having acted amiſs in this affair.

I could

I could anſwer him only with my tears, but how was my diſtreſs augmented, when the ſervant entering told us, he went to inform Monſieur St. Alnais that we waited tea, but that no body anſwering, tho' he tapped repeatedly at the door, he opened it ſoftly, and ſaw him ſtretched on the bed, weeping, and ſeemingly in the greateſt affliction.

My brother ſtarted from his chair, and turned as pale as death; he flew to the chamber of his friend, and found him indeed as he feared, in the utmoſt agony of diſtreſs. He threw himſelf beſide him on the bed, and preſſing him in his arms, entreated with tears his forgiveneſs. In what have you, in what could you have offended me, replied the amiable, the generous St. Alnais; no, alas! it is I myſelf, who am the only object of my own reſentment; as long as my Edward, and his lovely ſiſter were happy, I mourned but in ſecret the ſeverity of my fate; orphaned, outcaſt from the world, tortured with the pangs of hopeleſs paſſion, one only conſolation remained to ſweeten the bitter cup of anguiſh, a friend, the deareſt, the beſt beloved of friends,

friends, and he too caſts me from him; he thinks me proud, inſenſible, ungrateful; he is grieved, he is offended at me, and that, however involuntary, on my part, however impoſſible to be avoided. I can never pardon myſelf that.

Edward did all in his power to calm the agitation of his mind; he aſſured him in the tendereſt manner, that the ſudden diſappointment of his firſt and favourite wiſh was alone the cauſe of thoſe harſh expreſſions, the recollection of which now gave him ſo much pain, that he now ſaw and admired, though he could not but regret the extreme nobleneſs of his conduct; that he was now become, if poſſible, dearer to him than ever, and that he would ceaſe to importune him upon a ſubject which occaſioned him ſo much diſtreſs, but leave it to friendſhip and his own heart, to determine him in what manner he would act.

They embraced, and my brother ſeeing him exceſſively agitated, left him to repoſe, and came to inform me of what had paſſed; my tears

tears flowed in abundance, they would not be reſtrained, though I feared that he might conſider them as a reproach, and perhaps be offended with me; but my foreboding heart anticipated its preſent miſery, and its anguiſh would have vent.

My father and mother did not return till late, and I haſtened to bed that they might not perceive the dejection of my ſpirits. Next morning, upon enquiring of Edward for his friend, he told me with an air of the deepeſt affliction, that he was then extremely ill, and in a very high fever; to you I need not ſay how this intelligence ſhocked me, till my fears were alarmed by the idea of loſing. I was ignorant of the ſtrength of my affection for him, and that and my tears almoſt deprived me of reaſon.

I no longer ſtudied to conceal the ſecret of my heart; I called repeatedly on his name, I entreated permiſſion to attend him: my dearеſt mother ſtrove in vain to hide from my father the exceſs of my grief. He heard, he was enraged at it; he entered my chamber with

with a face and voice of fury, raved, curſed his own ſtupid folly, for being ſo long blind to my romantic paſſion, and declared that if I did not give up all thoughts of this upſtart ſoldier of fortune, (as he termed him,) he would caſt me alike from his love as his protection.

Never, never, will I ceaſe to love thee, my beloved, I exclaimed with a deſperate courage. O my God (and I dropped on my knees) preſerve him, heal him, reſtore him to my aching heart, or join us in death together, ſince without him nothing in life can afford me the ſmalleſt conſolation; my father looked ſternly at me, muttered a curſe, and flung out of the room.

Would to heaven I was like you, my gentle, my ſaint-like Louiſa, that I could mingle a little patience, a little reſignation with my griefs,—but yet,—the diſtracting cauſe.

He ſtill continues extremely ill, and raves I am told inceſſantly of his mother and me. They will not let me even ſee him; they are all,

all, all againſt me, even Edward himſelf denies me this ſmall comfort; poor Edward, he is wild, frantic with apprehenſion at the danger of his beloved friend; I do not think he would ſurvive his death, and what then, oh! what would be the fate of your

H. ROCHDALE.

LETTER XL.

Lord MORDAUNT to CHARLES ASHWORTH, Esq; at Bath.

Berkley Square.

BEyond my moſt ſanguine, my moſt extravagant hopes of happineſs am I bleſſed, my dear Charles. I wiſhed, but ſcarcely ventured to hope, that Mr. Wyndham would accept of my father's invitation. I was therefore ſurprized and overjoyed at receiving a letter from my ſiſter, informing me that her huſband was returned, and that my Louiſa and her father intended to accompany them both to London. I would have flown to meet and eſcort them hither, but my father was ſomething indiſpoſed, and requeſted I would wait their arrival.

They came.—I welcomed Mr. Wyndham, my ſiſter, and her lord with a joyful, but haſty embrace, and took no notice at all of a ſtrange

ſtrange lady who came in their company, but ſeizing the hand of my Louiſa, and preſſing it to my heart, I led her trembling to my father's apartment.

He roſe at her entrance.—Miſs Wyndham, my deareſt father, ſaid I: he came forward, he took both her hands, and regarded her with a mixture of admiration and reſpect. I never ſaw her look ſo exquiſitely lovely; a bluſh of the ſweeteſt, the moſt delicate ſenſibility, alternately coloured and deſerted her cheek, while her gentle timid eye was modeſtly averted from his gaze. Charming girl! at laſt he exclaimed with fervour; upon my ſoul, ſhe is a charming girl! do not tremble my ſweet one, I would not diſtreſs or offend you for the world, and in ſpight of that world I muſt love and admire you. She raiſed his hand to her lips; he was affected, his eye filled. Sweet girl, he again repeated, and preſſed her to his boſom. He then led her to a chair, ſeated himſelf beſide her, held her hand in his, and continued gazing in her bluſhing face.

I left the room for a moment, and returned with Mr. Wyndham. Lord Granville again roſe,

roſe, and came forward. The father of my lovely Louiſa, my deareſt ſir, ſaid I.—They approached, they gazed at each other, and both, as if agitated by the ſame emotion, changed colour, and ſeemed deprived of the power of utterance; at laſt my father exclaimed, What is it you ſay?—Wyndham! Wyndham!—I ſhould know that face.—It is my Arundel, my Henry,—they ruſhed to each other's arms. My Sedley, my beloved friend, cried Mr. Wyndham, it is indeed your Arundel, your happy Arundel, who embraces you.

I will not attempt to deſcribe their tranſports, my own were beyond the power of expreſſion. I flew to my Louiſa, who ſtood trembling with aſtoniſhment and joy. I caught her to my boſom with ſilent exſtaſy, and preſſed her to my beating heart.

Meanwhile Mr. Wyndham, whom we muſt now ſtile Lord Arundel, went out, and quickly returned with a lady, (the ſame who had eſcaped my notice,) and introduced her to my father as his wife: he embraced her as an old, and very dear acquaintance. This was all a myſtery to me. I returned to my Louiſa with aſtoniſh-

aſtoniſhment, and aſked her if ſhe had indeed a mother? ſhe replied in the affirmative, but that it was not many days ſince ſhe had found her, and that her father and Lady Jerſey had deſired that ſhe might not mention any thing of it to me, as the diſcovery could not be made without making me acquainted with their rank, and her father determined to keep that concealed till he ſhould try if generoſity and affection alone would be ſufficient to get the better of Lord Granville's prejudice, and induce him to conſent to our happineſs.

When we were all a little compoſed, Lord Granville turned to me, and taking my hand and cloſing it with that of my Louiſa, and raiſing his eyes to heaven—Thou haſt already paired theſe hearts, my God, he exclaimed, I joined their hands while infants, and prayed that they might live to this extatic period; praiſed be thy name, and thy indulgent Providence that has thus happily accompliſhed my wiſh; I here join them a ſecond time, and entreat thy bleſſing upon them. How awful, how tranſporting this benediction! I ſhould be all rapture, if my Louiſa's dejection did not damp my joy; ſhe has a friend, an amiable friend

friend who is in very great affliction, and ſhe is gone to comfort the poor mourner; I juſt ſnatch a few moments to write while ſhe is abſent.

With my firſt leiſure I will give you the hiſtory of her amiable parents, it is indeed a ſeries of moſt intereſting events. You will wonder perhaps that Lord Arundel ſhould be ſurprized at meeting an old and quondam friend in my father, when he knew that a perſon of that title reſided in this kingdom; but when they laſt parted, my father was only baron of Sedley, and he had no expectation of the Granville title or eſtate; he ſucceeded however as next heir to both on his return from France, as the only ſon of the late earl died of a fall from his horſe, and his father did not long ſurvive him.

Adieu,—my angel is returned,—not a ſyllable more ſhould the wealth of the Indies purchaſe from your

H. MORDAUNT.

LET-

LETTER XLI.

Miſs ROCHDALE to Lady WILMOT.

O My dear, deareſt Lady Wilmot, ſuch happineſs! ſuch an unexpected diſcovery! my St. Alnais,—he has found a mother,—a father, —a ſiſter,—he recovers, he lives, and lives for his Henrietta. Lord Charles Wingrove, (for ſuch is now his title,) the brother of my Louiſa, in fortune more than my equal, in rank ſo much my ſuperior, can have no doubt of my father's approbation.

I was obliged to conclude my laſt in a hurry, to receive my lovely friend and her mother, who arrived in town that day with Lord and Lady Jerſey. I flew to embrace her, and ſhe preſented me to the Counteſs of Arundel her

her mother, who ſaluted me with politeneſs and affection; Louiſa told me ſhe had hinted to her mother her ſuſpicions concerning St. Alnais, and ſhe requeſted, if poſſible, that ſhe might be permitted to ſee him. I replied that he was then delirious and very ill, but that if ſhe and the counteſs would walk up ſtairs, I would try if it would be allowed us to comply with her deſire. She eagerly aſſented, and followed with Louiſa to his anti-chamber. I opened the door ſoftly, beckoned my brother to come out, and informed him of my errand. He bowed reſpectfully to the counteſs, ſighed deeply, and taking her hand, led her into the chamber.

Louiſa and I ſtole after. St. Alnais was aſleep, his face was half averted, and Lady Arundel gazed in ſilence on the bed, as if afraid to approach; at laſt he uttered ſome incoherent ſentences, ſeemed diſturbed by an uneaſy dream, and called repeatedly on his mother and me.

She ſtarted at the ſound of his voice, and ſtepping up with quickneſs, and bending over him, ſhe ſuddenly clapped her hands together, and

and exclaimed, O, my ſon, my ſon!—have I then found you, but to loſe you, my child; ſhe ſaid no more, her voice faltered, her limbs trembled, and ſhe would have fallen to the ground, had we not ſupported, and placed her in a chair.

St. Alnais waked at the noiſe; he turned and gazed at her for a moment, and ſpringing up in the bed, he feebly articulated, My mother—oh!—and fainted away.

I know nothing of what followed, I was inſenſible to every thing about me; on opening my eyes, I found myſelf on my own bed, my mother, Edward, and Louiſa beſide me. I was alarmed, I ſcreamed out, Ah! he is dead! he is dead!—why elſe thoſe tears?—Not ſo, my deareſt Henrietta, ſaid my brother, he is now fully apprized of his happineſs, and I truſt that the event will be ſalutary; you will now be ſuffered to attend him, and adminiſter the only medicine he at preſent ſtands in need of, to ſee, to hear you; what was formerly the ſource of his diſquiet, will now be of the greateſt efficacy in contributing to his cure.

Thus

Thus you find me, my dear Lady Wilmot, the happieſt, at leaſt one of the happieſt of my ſex. My Charles has already ſeen his father, and lovely ſiſter, the interview was exceedingly affecting; the Earl preſſed me tenderly in his arms, called me generous girl, his daughter, his other Louiſa. My poor Edward is almoſt wild with joy. Lord and Lady Jerſey, and Lord Granville too have been here, what a numerous, what a happy family ſhall we be!

My Charles is now able to riſe, and dreſs; he will not ſuffer me a moment from his ſide. I ſit by him, and read, and work, and chat by turns; he liſtens to me delighted, he holds my hand in his, he preſſes it alternately to his lips and his boſom. I ſometimes ſteal a look, and find him gazing on my face, with the tear of tenderneſs, and tranſport trembles in his eye.

Lady Jerſey tells me ſhe has already informed you of every thing reſpecting the Earl and Counteſs of Arundel. How intereſting, how aſtoniſhing their hiſtory? how intricate the mazy windings through which they have been

conducted

conducted to happineſs? Myſterious Providence! never let the virtuous mind deſpair of thy protection.

Farewell, my beloved friend. Shall I not ſee you ſoon? will you not honour a certain event with your preſence? nothing would then be wanting to the enjoyment of

Your

H. ROCHDALE.

FINIS.